FROM THE LIBRARY OF

REV. LOUIS FITZGERALD BENSON, D. D.

BEQUEATHED BY HIM TO

THE LIBRARY OF

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Division SCB

Section 4400

THE

BOOK OF PSALMS.

W. R. Williams

OF PRINCETON
SEP 19 1936
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE

BOOK OF PSALMS;

TRANSLATED

INTO

ENGLISH VERSE.

BY GEORGE BURGESS, A. M.

RECTOR OF CHRIST CHURCH, HARTFORD.

NEW YORK:
F. J. HUNTINGTON AND CO.
174 PEARL STREET.
1840.

" Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1839, by
F. J. HUNTINGTON & CO.
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the Southern District of
New York."

L. Skinner, Printer,
HARTFORD.

TO THE CONGREGATION

OF

CHRIST CHURCH, HARTFORD,

THIS VOLUME,

THE RELAXATION OF A FEW YEARS

WHICH HAVE BEEN DEVOTED AND DUE

TO THEIR SERVICE

IN THE LORD,

IS,

IN REMEMBRANCE OF A THOUSAND KINDNESSES,

RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY

INSCRIBED BY

THEIR PASTOR.

INTRODUCTION.

The sister arts of poetry and music seem to have been consecrated from their infancy. In the most ancient literature of the world, the most ancient poems were songs of praise. When Moses a second time published the law, immediately before his death, he taught the people a song, to be transmitted to successive generations; and the later prophets and sages of Israel renewed from age to age, the echo of divine minstrelsy. The seer played upon the harp, while future scenes became present to his soul; and the hill of the temple resounded to the psaltery, the cymbal, and the voice of sacred song.

In the Book of Psalms we possess at once the lyric poetry of the Jewish nation, and the inspired prayers and praises of holy men of old. The entire collection has commonly been named the Psalms of David, because most of them were the work of that sweet singer of Israel. Many, however, were written by other authors, at various periods between the age of Moses and the return from the captivity; a space of a thousand years. The time at which inscriptions were prefixed to so many of the Psalms, is uncertain; but the circumstance that these inscriptions are not universal, and the arguments which seem to shew the incorrectness of some of them, forbid us to believe that they were added in the days of the authors themselves. Some of them are directions to the master of the music, as well as indications of the writer or occasion; and it is not improbable that in the time of the second temple, all these inscriptions were prepared, the names of the several authors being given, so far as they had been transmitted by special traditions. Of the fifty-one anonymous Psalms, a considerable portion must certainly be ascribed to David. The

efforts of some commentators to fix or conjecture the historical occasion of each Psalm, betray a singular disregard of common probabilities; as if all must have received their origin from some of the few events, which are related in the Old Testament. Bishop Horsley has well spoken of these efforts as "misapplied labours, employing much ingenuity and leisure" in vain.

"The Psalter," says the best of the practical commentators,* "was the liturgy of the Jewish Church." In the temple service, the Psalms were sung by alternate choirs; and at this day, in the synagogues, the congregation respond to the precentor. Our Saviour and the apostles undoubtedly united their voices with the voices of the nation, in these sacred songs; and at the establishment of the Christian Church, they were immediately transferred to its public and private worship. The early Christians sang them when they were assembled for divine service; when they buried their dead; before and after their meals; and amidst their families, before retiring to rest. They were heard from the lips of the labourer and the soldier, the housewife and the traveller. In reading the history of the primitive Church, and the writings of the Fathers, we seem to listen to one burst of psalmody from a world awaking to the knowledge of its Redeemer. "The Psalm," says St. Basil,† "is the calm of souls, the arbiter of peace: it represses tumultuous and turbulent thoughts: it restrains the violence of passion, and checks lasciviousness. The psalm conciliates hearts, associates those who are divided, and reconciles enemies. For who could ever hold him as an enemy, with whom he had raised his voice to God? So also the singing of psalms unites good men in charity: it finds in the union of voices a certain bond of concord, and joins the whole people through the symphony of a single choir. The psalm puts demons to flight, secures the aid of angels, supplies arms against nightly terrors, is repose from daily labours; the safety of infants, the honour of youth, the consolation of the aged, the most becoming ornament of woman: it peoples the solitude, it instructs the forum." "The Psalm," says St. Ambrose,‡

* Bishop Horne. † Hom. in Ps. I. ‡ In Ps. Præf. 9.

"is the benediction of the people, the praise of God, the discourse of all, the voice of the church, the loud confession of faith, the full devotion of authority, the gladness of liberty, the shout of pleasure, the exultation of mirth. It mitigates wrath, it banishes solicitude, it alleviates sorrow. It is nightly armour, daily guidance, a shield in fear, a holy festival, the image of tranquillity, the pledge of peace and concord, forming one strain, from various and unequal voices, like the lyre with its many strings. The dawn of day resounds with the psalm; and the psalm is re-echoed by the evening. Women are commanded by the apostle to be silent in the church; but in the psalm they may well cry aloud: this is sweet in every age, nor for either sex unsuitable." Other hymns might be sung; but the Psalms of David were the first choice of the Church. To the present time, the Greek, the Roman, and the English Churches, at least, make them a part of their daily service, dividing them, according to the custom of antiquity, into portions of nearly equal length, so that the whole are said or sung within a certain period. No where, amongst Christians, are they entirely discarded from the offices of the sanctuary, or from the devotions of the family and the closet. Godeau, Bishop of Grasse, in the preface to his French Paraphrase of the Psalms, gives honourable testimony to the old Hugonot usage. "Those whose separation from the church we deplore, have rendered their version celebrated, by the agreeable airs which skilful musicians have composed for them. To know these sacred songs by heart is amongst them as it were a sign of their communion; and to our great shame, in the cities where they are most numerous, the Psalms are continually heard from the mouth of the artizans, and in the country from that of the labourers; while the Catholics are either silent, or sing indecent songs."

Such an employment of the Psalms, in Jewish or Christian times, could be supported only by the opinion that they uniformly expressed feelings and thoughts which might be generally adopted by the pious, or else which belonged appropriately to some individual in whom all had a religious interest, or some society which was sacred in the eyes

of all. That individual could be only the Messiah; that society the Church. It has been accordingly the belief of all ages that the testimony of Christ is the spirit of this sacred book. The stream of ancient interpretation flows fully in this direction; and it is sanctioned by the authority of our Lord and his apostles. For, several Psalms are applied in the New Testament to Christ and the redemption, which otherwise we should never have so understood in their literal meaning. What is this, but to afford us a key to the spiritual interpretation of the rest?

As the Psalms were originally designed to be sung, and as, in modern languages, they cannot be extensively sung except in a metrical form, they have required and received poetical versions. The number of entire versions in our own language exceeds thirty. It is remarkable, however, that not one of these has attained any eminence in the public estimation;* and the best amongst them, with the exception of those of Tate and Brady and of Watts, are very little known. The version of Merrick has perhaps the most of literary merit; but its diffuseness and general want of strength must always prevent its popularity. The other translations have sometimes very fine passages; but no such uniform excellence as could win lasting favour, or discourage future efforts. Many of the versions, too, like those of Watts and Goode, are rather paraphrases than translations; expressing rather the doctrines of the Gospel in their own distinct form, than the devout feelings of the Psalmist, as the Spirit taught him to utter them for all ages to come.

In the present version, the author has endeavoured to follow the same principles which would govern him in the translation of any ancient poems into English verse; to be so literal, as to give the very sentiment, and, if possible, the spirit of the original, and yet so free as not to inflict pain on the reader of taste. If he has failed, he may say with Mr. Goode, "it will be his solace that he has failed amongst

* The version of Professor Keble had not appeared, or was, at least, unknown in America, when this volume was placed in the hands of the publishers.

names the most respectable in the annals of piety and literature." He will but have made an unsuccessful attempt in a region where the very attempt was more delightful than success in other fields. The charm of his subject, the happiness of making these divine strains more truly his own, has already more than rewarded him; and he lays aside the harp of Sion from his unskilful hand with devout thanks that he has been permitted to awaken, for his own soul at least, its heavenly melody.

PSALM I.

How bless'd the man, who will not stray
Where godless counsels tempt his feet;
Who stands not in the sinner's way;
Who sits not in the scorner's seat;

But in the Lord's most holy law
Has, day by day, his dear delight,
While thence his heav'nly musings draw
Sweet strength at morn, sweet rest at night.

He blooms as blooms the tree that springs
Where mingling waters ceaseless glide:
Still in its time its fruit it brings;
And still his fragrant works abide.

But like the chaff, that, on the gale,
O'er distant fields forgotten flies,
So, when thy tempests, Lord, prevail,
Th' affrighted sinner flees and dies.

Not in the judgment's hour of wrath
Shall they to truth's fair courts ascend:
God knows and loves the good man's path;
But their broad road in death shall end.

NOTES.—In some manuscripts, this Psalm is not numbered: in others it is connected with the second. The cause may have been, that it was viewed as a kind of proem to the whole collection. Its character fitted it for this, as it is a general picture of the happiness of the servant of God, in contrast with the dreadful end of the scoffer. The author cannot now be determined; and there is nothing in the Psalm to fix its date, or assign it any special occasion. It is re-

marked by Gataker, that its argument is the same with that maxim, often repeated by the Stoics, and found in Plato as the words of Socrates;

Οἱ ἀγαθοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων εὐδαίμονες, οἱ κακοὶ ἄθλιοι·

"The good are the happy: the bad are wretched."

But in the Lord's most holy law. The law, in the Psalms, must be viewed as embracing the whole revelation of God, by his word, in his works, or in the conscience of man.

As blooms the tree. This comparison is found in Jeremiah, xvii. 8.

> "For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters,
> And that spreadeth out her roots by the river,
> And shall not see when heat cometh,
> But her leaf shall be green;
> And shall not be careful in the year of drought,
> Neither shall cease from yielding fruit."

Where mingling waters ceaseless glide. Canals are probably meant, which, in those parts of the East that are traversed by rivers, pass from them into the country; as, in Egypt, from the Nile; in Erak Arabi, the ancient Babylonia, from the Euphrates. "Such canals," says J. E. Faber, "are very generally bordered with trees. For when, during the heat of summer, in this climate, all the verdure of the trees and fields dries up, so that the most pleasant pastures resemble parched deserts, and a stranger, unacquainted with the nature of the climate, might believe that the land would never resume its verdure, nor a tree its foliage; the trees planted near the river, from which they draw constant refreshment, even during the greatest heat, remain unchanged in their verdant dress."

And still his fragrant works abide. There is something of the same ambiguity in the original, which may be here observed in the translation. The passage from the figurative to the literal mode of speech is by no means distinctly defined.

Like the chaff. In the East, the threshing-floors are in the open air, often in elevated places. The grain was either trodden out by oxen, or beaten out with instruments which, at the same time, cut the straw into small pieces; and afterwards, the whole being exposed with a fork to the wind, the chaff and straw were borne away, and the kernels, the clods of earth with grain cleaving to them, and the ears not yet thoroughly threshed, fell to the ground. Then, the clods of earth were collected, broken, and, by a sieve, separated from the grain. Several yoke of oxen were again driven over the heap; and all was at last exposed to the wind by a fan. Thus, threshing, the sieve and the fan became the frequent emblems of destruction or dispersion.

The judgment's hour of wrath. The Chaldee Paraphrase, and the Jewish writers generally, interpret this of the last judgment.

PSALM II.

Why roars the nations' stormy ire?
Why chafes their tumult vain?
The lords of earth in league conspire,
And kings their warriors train:
Against the Lord they lift their hands;
Against his Christ they say,
"Come, let us break their slavish bands,
And cast their chains away!"

Enthron'd above the starry sky,
Mid many an angel host,
God laughs to scorn the hostile cry,
And mocks the rebel boast:
Nor long his awful voice is still;
It utters stern disdain;
"Yet, firm on Sion's holy hill,
My chosen king shall reign."

I speak the Lord's supreme decree;
"This day my Son art thou:
Ask, and the heathen thine shall be,
And earth's wide realms shall bow:
Thine iron rod, thy righteous sway,
Shall quell their haughty trust;
And, like a vase of fragile clay,
Crush all their might to dust."

Ye kings of earth, take counsel here;
Ye chiefs, be timely wise:
Rejoice with trembling; serve in fear;
Nor tempt his wrath to rise:
Do homage to the kingly Son,
Ere yet ye sink in woe:
Be but the wasting flame begun,
How bless'd his peace to know!

NOTES.—The authority of apostles ascribes the second Psalm to David, and designates it as a prophecy of the mediatorial reign of our Saviour. (Acts iv. 25—27. xiii. 33. Heb. i. 5.) From the mention of the "holy hill of Sion," it may be inferred that it was composed after the removal of the ark to Jerusalem.

Why roars the nations' stormy ire? With similar abruptness Horace addresses the Roman people, rushing to arms. (Epod. vii.)

"Quo, quo scelesti ruitis? aut cur dexteris
Aptantur enses conditi?"
Oh, whither, whither, rush ye in your guilt?
Why grasps each fierce right hand th' impatient hilt?

Against his Christ they say. The reader will hardly need to be told, that Messiah is the Hebrew word, of which Christ is the Greek, and Anointed the English.

Come, let us break their slavish bands. This and the following line are taken from the version of Tate and Brady.

Enthron'd above the starry sky. Such a representation is not only scriptural, but in correspondence with the natural instincts of the soul, and therefore with the imagery of all languages and of the heathen poets.

I speak the Lord's supreme decree. These are the words of the Messiah.

Thine iron rod. The rod or sceptre of remote antiquity was a wooden staff, not much shorter than the height of a man, with golden studs or nails, or sometimes ornamented at the top with a round knob. Such are seen in the hands of the Persian kings, on the monuments of Persepolis.

And like a vase of fragile clay. So Jeremiah, xix. 11.

"Even so will I break this people and this city,
As one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again."
And Isaiah, xxx. 14.
"And he shall break it
As the breaking of the potter's vessel, that is broken in pieces."

Ye kings of earth. The prophet resumes his own address.

Do homage to the kingly Son. A kiss was sometimes a token of homage. (1 Sam. x. 1. 1 Kings xix. 18. Hos. xiii. 2. Job xxxi. 27.) It was an ancient custom of the Persians, to give it when they took the oath of allegiance. A Greek poet, speaking of averting the wrath of the Goddess of Vengeance, says;

Ἡ Νέμεσιν δεινὴν οὐχὶ κύσασα θεὸν·

Anth. Græc. L. vi.

Who hath not kiss'd dread Nemesis divine.

PSALM III.

O Lord, how many are my foes!
How vast a host to crush me rose!
How many deem my soul dismay'd,
And cry, "his God no more shall aid!"

But thou my stedfast buckler art;
Thou lift'st my head, and cheer'st my heart:
My pray'r was tow'rds thy holy hill,
And thou, O Lord, hast answer'd still.

I laid me down, and sweetly slept;
I woke, for God my slumbers kept:
Though rage around me, far and near,
Ten thousand foes, I cannot fear.

O Lord my God, arise, relieve:
Thine arm the loftiest helms can cleave;
And oft has cleft, mine aid to bring:
Bless'd are thy people, Saviour King!

NOTES.—The title prefixed is, "A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son;" and the Psalm contains nothing inconsistent with this date, but, on the other hand, nothing that would demonstrate its correctness. A later occasion, however, than the establishment of the sanctuary on Mount Sion, is certainly fixed by the second stanza.

The word "Selah" occurs in this Psalm. It was a musical direction; and "should therefore," says Hammond, "be omitted in translations where the metre and music is lost." This is equally true, whether the Hebrew poetry was strictly metrical, according to the theory of Bishop Hare, or whether, as is the prevailing opinion, it had no other rhythm than that which naturally attends its parallelisms. On neither supposition, could a direction like this be transferred into another language.

Thine arm the loftiest helms can cleave. The figure in the original seems to be taken from wild beasts, whose power to injure is chiefly removed, when their jaws and teeth are broken. I have thought that, as this image is here employed to represent the overthrow of men, it might be given with sufficient accuracy by the line which is adopted above.

PSALM IV.

Oh, hear me, hear me, when I call,
Thou Lord, whose truth to me is all:
Oft hast thou sav'd in hours of fear;
Oh, yet in mercy bow thine ear.

How long shall men, to die but born,
My glory change to shame and scorn?
Why seek ye still each vain deceit,
And deem the words of falsehood sweet?

But know, the Lord hath set apart
One chosen shrine, the upright heart:
And he who sav'd in hours of fear
Shall yet in mercy bow his ear.

Then, dread his wrath, and flee from sin,
And write his judgments deep within:
Try thine own breast, by night, alone,
And bend in silence at his throne.

Come with the off'ring of the just,
And make thy God thine only trust:
While thousands cry, some good to see,
Lord, let thy face shine bright on me.

It glads my heart, that joy divine,
Far more than wealth of corn and wine:
I lay me down to peaceful sleep,
For thou, O Lord, alone canst keep.

NOTES.—This Psalm is entitled, "for the chief musician, a Psalm of David, upon the stringed instruments," and is doubtless the work of the royal poet.

Then dread his wrath, and flee from sin. In the Septuagint, this is, "be ye angry and sin not;" a passage transcribed in the Epistle to the Ephesians. (iv. 26.) It is not, however, cited authoritatively; and is plainly an incorrect interpretation.

Try thine own breast. These frequent changes of person and address, though more common, perhaps, in the Hebrew poets than in others, are yet in all literature a part of the lyrical style, and contribute to the peculiar character of that bold kind of composition.

Lord, let thy face shine bright on me. How beautiful is this image, now so common, which unites in the consciousness of divine favour the bright smile of a friend, and the glory of that light which was reflected from the face of Moses!

Far more than wealth of corn and wine. An abundant harvest and vintage were the most joyous seasons amongst a nation of husbandmen. The version of Bishop Hall is here the best;

> "But thou, O Lord, lift up to me
> The light of that sweet look of thine;
> So shall my soul more gladsome be
> Than theirs with all their corn and wine."

PSALM V.

Oh, take the praise I bring,
And see my deep desire,
And hear my cry, thou God and King,
To whom my pow'rs aspire:
With morn's first glimm'rings bright,
My voice shall mount on high;
And heav'n shall open, rob'd in light,
On mine awaking eye.

Sin shall not win thy smile,
Nor malice dwell with thee,
Nor pride thy sacred courts defile,
Nor guilt thy judgment flee:
Dark o'er the men of lies
Shall hang thy stedfast hate;
And wrath's red blade, and fraud's disguise
Shall draw th' avenging fate.

But, girt with mercies round,
Within thy gates I tread;
I turn me tow'rds thy temple's bound,
And bow in sacred dread:

Oh, make my footsteps true,
For many foes are nigh;
And clear before my peaceful view
Let thy dear pathway lie.

Their words are faithless breath;
Their heart destruction weaves;
A tempter to the halls of death,
Their flatt'ring tongue deceives:
Destroy them, God most just;
Let craft its own betray:
Mid countless sins, tread down like dust
The rebels to thy sway.

But they who love thy name,
And trust thy gracious aid,
Shall loud in shouts thy might proclaim
In their defence array'd:
For on the righteous head
Thy blessing, Lord, is seal'd;
And thy strong love is o'er him spread,
An adamantine shield.

NOTES.—The title of this Psalm is, "For the chief musician, a Psalm of David, upon the wind instruments." Nehiloth seems a general name for flutes and instruments of similar construction. The Psalm may without improbability be supposed to have been written at the time when David lived at the court of Saul, surrounded by perfidious enemies. Bishop Horsley, however, imagines it to be the prayer of a Priest or Levite at the altar of the inner court, at the hour of the morning sacrifice.

I turn me tow'rds thy temple's bound. If the temple at Jerusalem was not yet erected, as it was not at the date mentioned above, it is still possible that the Psalmist might thus speak of the divine dwelling in heaven. In later times, however, the distant Jews prayed with their faces towards Jerusalem. (1 Kings viii. 38, 48. Daniel vi. 10.)

A tempter to the halls of death. St. Paul has quoted this as a fit description of the state of mankind, both Jews and Gentiles. (Rom. iii. 13.)

PSALM VI.

Lord, not in wrath my sin reprove,
Nor let thy rod in vengeance move:
Have mercy, Lord, all faint I cry,
And heal the frame that droops to die.

My limbs, my soul, with anguish burn:
How long, O Lord? ah, yet return!
There is no mem'ry in the grave,
Nor death can praise: return, and save!

My weary groans have no repose;
All night my couch with tears o'erflows;
Mine eyes are dim and dull with tears;
And foes have left the sign of years.

O men of guilt, depart, depart:
The Lord hath heard my weeping heart:
He knows my pray'r, he owns my call;
In shame my foes shall flee and fall.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician on the stringed instruments, a Psalm of David, upon the eight-stringed harp." It was composed in deep affliction; but whether this proceeded from bodily sickness, or from the persecutions of enemies, or from the heavy consciousness of guilt, it may be difficult to decide with confidence. The last supposition appears not improbable.

There is no mem'ry in the grave. In passages like this, the view of the sacred writers of the Old Testament is confined to death, as the end of all mortal events; and retribution in the eternal world, although they surely believed it, is excluded from their immediate contemplation. Or, if a still more solemn meaning be here connected with the grave, it might well be pleaded before God, that condemnation and destruction cannot glorify him as he desires to be glorified.

All night my couch with tears o'erflows. So Homer, Odyss. xvii. 102, 103.

Λέξομαι ἐις ἐυνην η μοι τονόεσσα τέτυκται
'Αιεὶ δάκρυς' 'εμῶισι πεφυρμένη.

I seek the couch that hears my weary sighs,
And flows with floods from these still streaming eyes.

And foes have left the sign of years. The resemblance between the effects of sorrow and those of old age is illustrated by too frequent

examples. It is well known that violent grief has sometimes covered the head with gray hairs. Mr. Fry, at this passage, cites from Southey's Roderick;

> "Sunk was that eye
> Of sov'reignty; and on th' emaciate cheek
> Had penitence and anguish deeply drawn
> Their furrows premature, forestalling time,
> And shedding upon thirty's brow more snow
> Than threescore winters, in their natural course,
> Might else have sprinkled there."

O men of guilt, depart, depart. These are the words of our Lord to the hypocrites, in the judgment. (Matt. vii. 23.)

PSALM VII.

O Lord my God, in thee I trust:
From lion foes defend;
Lest, torn and trampled in the dust,
I sink, without a friend!

O Lord my God, if on my hand
The stain of guilt I hide;
If I have rent the peaceful band,
Nor good for ill replied;

Then, let my foe, in righteous strife,
Pursue and hunt me down:
Then, let him trample on my life,
And lay in dust my crown.

Awake, O Lord, in wrath awake:
The strong oppressors rave:
Come, wielding for thy servant's sake,
The law thy justice gave.

So, round thy pomp, a subject train,
Shall nations gather nigh:
Then, spread so far thy conqu'ring reign,
And rear thy throne on high.

The Lord shall judge when realms appeal:
Oh, judge and own my cause;
As thou hast known mine upright zeal,
As I have lov'd thy laws.

Oh, end the sinner's guilty might,
And let the righteous rise,
Thou righteous God, whose glance of light
The secret spirit tries.

The God of strength my shield extends,
The Saviour of the pure;
Whose just right arm the just defends,
Whose wrath is daily sure.

He steels his sword, he bends his bow,
If pride disdain to turn:
He lifts the arms of deadly blow,
And forms the shafts to burn.

Lo, deep within, each treach'rous breast
With guilt and ruin teems:
There, falsehood finds her chosen nest,
And bears deceitful dreams.

They fram'd the pit, and spread the toils;
And there their pride shall bow:
On guilt the guilty blow recoils,
And breaks the stubborn brow.

But I the righteous Lord will sing,
And all his truth adore:
To thee, my soul's Almighty King,
To thee my song shall soar.

NOTES.—"A Lamentation of David, which he sang unto the Lord, on the occasion of the words of Cush the Benjamite." The person thus mentioned, and his accusations or reproaches, are lost in oblivion; a circumstance which adds credibility to this title, as it proves that the idea could not have been borrowed, in later times, from the historical books of the Old Testament.

And forms the shafts to burn. There may be an allusion to the custom of wrapping the arrows in some combustible material, which was set on fire immediately before they were discharged. Such are mentioned by Livy. (Lib. xxxi. 8.) Ammianus Marcellinus describes a similar kind; (Rer. Gest. Lib. xxiii. 4.) "they consisted of a hollow reed, to the lower part of which, under the point or barb, was fastened a round receptacle made of iron, so that the arrow had the form of a distaff. The reed was filled with naphtha; and when the arrow was shot from a slack bow (for if it were discharged from a tight bow, the fire went out,) it struck the ranks of the enemies, and remained infixed, the flame consuming whatever it met: water poured on it increased its violence: there was no other means to extinguish it, except by throwing earth upon it." St. Paul speaks, (Eph. vi. 16.) of "the fiery darts of the wicked;" where, however, poisoned arrows may be the subject of the allusion.

They fram'd the pit, and spread the toils. The figure is borrowed from the pits which were dug for the purpose of taking wolves or other wild animals.

On guilt the guilty blow recoils. It descends, like a javelin or a stone thrown up from the foot of a wall or rock, but falling back upon the head of him who hurled it.

PSALM VIII.

Lord our Lord, how great art thou!
Heav'n and earth to bless thee bow:
Thou who writ'st thy praise on high,
Glorious on the spreading sky!

Yet, the babe's and suckling's song
Thou hast fill'd with strength so strong,
That the raging foe shall quail,
That th' avenger's arm shall fail.

When I see thy heav'nly arch,
Moon and stars in radiant march,
Where thy hand their station plac'd;
Where their path thy fingers trac'd;

What has man, O Lord of all,
That thine eye so low should fall?
Thou his honour'd crown hast giv'n
Just beneath the crowns of heav'n:

Thou hast taught thy works below
Him their sov'reign chief to know:
Flocks and herds, a countless train;
All that roams the fruitful plain;

All that cleaves th' ethereal blue;
All that glides the dark waves through:
Lord our Lord, how great art thou!
Heav'n and earth to bless thee bow!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David, upon the harp of Gath." The Gittith is supposed to have been a musical instrument, deriving its name from the city of Gath or Gath-Rimmon. It is thus rendered in the Chaldee Paraphrase.

Thou hast fill'd with strength so strong. This passage is cited by our Lord (Matt. xxi. 16.) from the Septuagint, "thou hast perfected praise."

When I see thy heav'nly arch. What amazing confirmation does the sentiment of the Psalmist receive from those disclosures of modern astronomy, which declare the distance and magnitude of the heavenly bodies, and seem to shew a world in every planet and star!

Just beneath the crowns of heav'n. In the Epistle to the Hebrews (ii. 6—9.) this passage is applied to illustrate the humiliation and exaltation of our Saviour. There is nothing in the Psalm, which would have led us, aside from the authority of the New Testament, to suppose any reference to Christ; but this is one of many instances which appear to evince that, in the Psalms thus applied in the New Testament, we have only a key to the remainder. The idea of such a secondary and higher sense, a "testimony of Jesus," which "is the spirit of prophecy," seems not only most subservient to devotion, but most agreeable to apostolic interpretation. In this instance, the two may be thus connected; "if human nature be so highly exalted by virtue of its creation, how much more by its assumption to the divine!"

PSALM IX.

O Lord most high, my swelling heart
Shall all thy praise proclaim,
The story of thy deeds impart,
And triumph in thy fame.

When on my foes thy terrors shine,
  They fall in shameful flight:
For judgment's spotless throne is thine,
  And thou maintain'st the right.

And thou hast quell'd the heathen's rage,
  And slain the impious race;
And from the tale of age to age
  Hast swept th' oppressor's trace.

Destruction's mighty task is fill'd,
  And pompous tow'rs are heaps:
And, mid the piles that none shall build,
  Their lords' lost mem'ry sleeps.

But firm th' eternal throne abides,
  The righteous Sov'reign reigns:
The realms of earth his sceptre guides,
  And judgment just sustains.

The Lord shall shield the heart oppress'd,
  Shall shield when perils low'r:
Who know thy name on thee shall rest,
  And trust thy faithful pow'r.

Sing, to the Lord of Sion sing;
  Tell all the world his deeds;
When blood and wrong his vengeance bring,
  The humblest cry he heeds.

Have mercy, Lord, and mark my woe,
  The sport of causeless hate:
Thou Lifter of the poor and low
  From death's eternal gate;

That, where thy thronging people meet,
  My song of praise may swell,
Till thine own Sion's queenly street
  Of thy deliv'rance tell.

Where heathen hands have spread the net,
There heathen feet have trod:
They mourn the snares themselves have set,
And know the righteous God.

The crowds who spurn his gentler reign
In hell's dark realm shall lie:
Not long shall weep the poor in vain,
Nor all his hope shall die.

Arise, O Lord, nor in thy sight
Let heathen pride prevail:
So let them own but man's their might,
And man how brief and frail!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David, on the death of Labben." Such is that version of this title, which has been given by some of the Rabbinical writers. The Chaldee Paraphrase supposes Goliath to be the person, on whose overthrow the Psalm was composed. Others would read, "on the death of his son;" an interpretation contradicted by the intense grief of David for Absalom. Other commentators understand it of the tune to which the Psalm was to be sung; and others, of the choir of virgins, by whom it was to be chanted. Mr. Street would render it, "to be performed by virgins and a youth;" and divides it accordingly. The Septuagint says, "on the secrets of the Son." It is impossible to determine with much confidence the real meaning of the superscription.

Have mercy, Lord, and mark my woe. This Psalm is a song of high thanksgiving; but the poet seems here, in awaiting the completion of his victory over all the enemies of God, to throw himself back for a moment, in imagination, to his former state of supplication and need.

PSALM X.

Why stands the Lord afar,
And hides in troublous hour,
And sees the wicked's haughty war
Th' afflicted seed o'erpow'r?

Oh, let their own dark guile
On them in ruin burst,

Who, vain in fortune's fleeting smile,
Bless whom the Lord hath curs'd.

Pride lights the wicked's face,
And fires his reckless eye:
Thine arm his thoughts disdain to trace;
Thy judgments roll so high.

His prosp'rous pathways rise;
He flouts the warning call:
"My foot shall ne'er be mov'd," he cries,
"Nor ill my lot befall."

So, on his lips has rung
The loud blasphemer's cry;
While, couch'd beneath his venom'd tongue,
Deceit and treach'ry lie.

By the still village path
He waits his guiltless prey,
Darts the keen glance of serpent wrath,
And longs to spring and slay.

He lurks as in the brake
The lion hides his lair:
He lurks, the passing poor to take,
To take in secret snare.

Torn falls the wretch, and bleeds
Within his fang and fold:
Yet cries his heart, "God never heeds;
He cares not to behold."

Remember, Lord, thy poor,
And lift th' avenging rod:
Why should the wicked's dream endure,
And mock the glance of God?

Thine eyes their malice see;
Thine hand must all repay:

The wretched orphan leans on thee,
And feels a heav'nly stay.

Oh, break th' oppressor's arm;
And search, till search be vain:
Then turns thy land from heathen harm
To thine eternal reign.

For thou the humble sigh
O Lord, hast deign'd to hear:
Thou giv'st the heart its contrite cry,
And giv'st thy list'ning ear;

To judge the orphan's right;
To bid th' oppress'd be free;
That never more from earthly might
The guiltless poor may flee.

NOTES.—The Septuagint and Vulgate unite the ninth and tenth Psalms, as one; and some have imagined that they formed originally one of the alphabetic Psalms, as there are some apparent traces, although often interrupted, of an alphabetic arrangement in the initial letters of the verses. This supposition, however, is refuted by the different character of the two Psalms; the first being, in its general frame, a song of triumph, the second a prayer for deliverance.

He flouts the warning call. This seems a sufficiently exact translation of the Hebrew. Schrœder renders it, "efflat tumido ore in eos." Our translation has it, "he puffeth at them."

So midst his speech has rung. This verse is a part of the description of mankind in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. (v. 14.)

While, couch'd beneath his venom'd tongue. The image may be borrowed from the poison of serpents.

He lurks, as in the brake. In the original the same repetition is found, which will be here observed in the version.

Torn falls the wretch, and bleeds. I have here adopted the translation of Rosenmueller and De Wette.

Thy hand must all repay. The literal version is, "to give into thy hand." A reference has been supposed, to the practice of writing on the palm of the hand, in order to preserve a thing in remembrance. So Isaiah (xlix. 16.)

"Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands,
Thy walls are continually before me."

So turns thy land from heathen harm. Merrick has given the conclusion of this Psalm in his happiest manner.

"Thine is the throne: beneath thy reign,
Immortal King! the tribes profane
Behold their dreams of conquest o'er,
And vanish, to be seen no more.
Thou, Lord, thy people's wish canst read,
Ere from their lips the pray'r proceed;
'Tis thine their drooping hearts to rear,
Bow to their wants th' attentive ear,
The weeping orphan's cheek to dry,
The guiltless suff'rer's cause to try,
To rein each earth-born tyrant's will,
And bid the sons of pride be still."

PSALM XI.

On the Lord my soul depending
Smiles to hear the taunting cry,
"To thy shelt'ring hills ascending,
Tim'rous bird, make haste and fly!"

"Lo, the wicked culls his quiver,
Bends his bow, and points his dart;
From the haunts where none deliver,
Aiming at the upright heart."

"When the ancient pillars tremble,
Where shall still the righteous cling?"
Where the saints of God assemble
Tow'rds their everlasting King!

Far o'er earth his eyes are wand'ring,
Through and through the mortal crowd;
E'en the righteous keenly pond'ring,
Low'ring judgment on the proud.

Him who tears sweet peace in sunder,
Him the Lord shall count his foe:
Tempests hot with flames and thunder
Hasten to his wild o'erthrow.

Such the cup that vengeance mingles,
When our God declares the doom;

While the just his justice singles,
Smiling on their dreariest gloom.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David." It had its origin, probably, like the three succeeding Psalms, in the times when he fled from the persecutions of Saul.

To thy shelt'ring hills ascending. The smaller birds, hunted by man upon the plains, or pursued in the open air by the larger and more rapacious, take refuge in the thickets of the mountains.

Tempests hot with flames and thunder. There may be an allusion to the fiery Simoom, before which whole caravans are swept down, and buried in the sands. Bishop Lowth translates this verse;

"Defluet super impios prunas ardentes,
Ignem et sulphur, et ventum urentem: hoc iis poculum exhauriendum est."

He shall rain upon them flaming coals,
Fire, and brimstone, and a burning wind:
This is the cup which they must drink.

Such the cup that vengeance mingles. This common figure is thought to be taken from the ancient custom that the head of the family should pour a cup for each of the household separately, filling it at his own pleasure.

PSALM XII.

Save, save, O Lord! on earthly ground
The good, the faithful fail:
Friend whispers friend, but false the sound,
And vile the treach'rous tale.

With flatt'ring tongues their tale they tell,
With hearts of smiling guile;
The Lord the flatt'ring tongues shall quell,
And change th' ensnaring smile:

Though loud they lift their swelling tone,
"Our words shall mighty be:
Our unchain'd lips are all our own:
Who rules the spirit free?"

Thus speaks our God, "I hear the cries
Of hearts oppress'd and poor;

Against the mocker I will rise,
And fix their home secure."

Words of the Lord, pure words and fast!
So through the furnace glide
The forms, in molten splendor cast,
Of silver sev'n times tried.

Thou, Lord, the impious bands shalt chase
Who boldly spread them round,
In days of gloom, when, high in place,
The shame of men are crown'd.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David, upon the eight-stringed harp."

Of silver sev'n times tried. The number seven is well known to be proverbial for many. Nebuchadnezzar gave command "that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated." (Dan. iii. 19.)

PSALM XIII.

How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget? forever?
How long the brightness of thy face o'ershroud?
How long shall throbbing cares my bosom sever?
How long my foes on vict'ry's height be proud?

Mark, Lord my God, and hear my deep complaining:
Lighten mine eye, lest soon in death it close;
Lest, their weak victim's prostrate might disdaining,
Shout in triumphant joy my godless foes.

But all my trust hath on thy goodness rested;
In thy salvation I shall shout ere long:
Because the Lord my path with love invested,
Yet shall I lift to him my grateful song.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David."

Lighten mine eye. In prosperity and joy, all things appear, even to the outward eye, as if irradiated with light; and darkness and sorrow are united in all our thoughts.

PSALM XIV.

The fool saith in his heart,
"There is no God to view:"
They wind their ways with loathsome art,
And no man's deeds are true.

From heav'n look'd down the Lord,
O'er all th' unnumber'd race,
If any lov'd his wisdom's word,
Or sought his faithful grace.

All, all are turn'd away,
To common ruin run:
Where'er may fall his eye's keen ray,
None doeth good, not one.

And know they naught, nor heed,
Whose hands with crime are red,
Whose pray'rless wants my flock must feed,
As feeds their common bread?

Fearful shall be their fear,
For God surrounds the just:
Who hopes in him your taunts may hear,
And triumph in his trust.

Oh, were salvation come
From Sion's holy King!
What joy shall light the exile's home,
When God his own shall bring!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David." The last verse, however, seems to disprove the correctness of the superscription, and to fix a later date, at a period during the misfortunes

and captivity of the nation. It is possible, however, that some writer at that time might have added that verse to a Psalm of David, which had before closed in a different manner. With some little variations, the fifty-third Psalm is a copy of the fourteenth.

The fool saith in his heart. In the language of the Scriptures iniquity and folly are one. Such is the eternal law, by which the true, the beautiful and the good can never be separated.

All, all are turn'd away. This passage is cited by St. Paul, (Rom. iii. 11, 12.) as descriptive of the condition of our whole, fallen race. In some copies of the Septuagint, in the Vulgate, the Ethiopic, the Arabic, and in one or two Hebrew manuscripts, it is followed here by the six verses, which follow it in the Epistle to the Romans; and these are also found in the English Psalter. But they were obviously drawn by the apostle from other places; and were probably added to this Psalm by Christian transcribers.

Fearful shall be their fear. The repetition in the original is here imitated.

PSALM XV.

Lord, who in thy bless'd courts shall dwell?
Who on thy holy hill shall rest?
Who upright walks; who labours well;
Who speaks the truth with honest breast;

Who bears no tale of sland'rous guile;
Who frames no ill, nor loves to hear;
In whose just eyes the vile are vile,
And thine own saints are pure and dear;

Who keeps the oath that brings him harm,
Nor swells with cruel gains his store,
Nor lifts, for gold, the law's high arm:
Who thus doth stand shall fall no more.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." It is a general opinion that this Psalm was composed and sung on the occasion of the transportation of the ark from the house of Obed-Edom to Mount Sion. This is extremely probable; but no such supposition ought to be adopted as a certainty, on which the interpreter may build with entire confidence.

Who on thy holy hill shall rest? The tabernacle was on Mount Sion; and the temple, afterwards, on Mount Moriah. From the thought of these holy hills of the Lord, the minds of his worshippers rise naturally towards his throne in the heaven of heavens.

PSALM XVI.

Keep me, O God! to thee I fly;
To thee my soul would vow:
Thou art, O Lord, my Lord most High;
My bliss is naught but thou.

Thy saints on earth, th' exalted few,
With them my joy is found:
On all who other paths pursue
Shall thorny griefs abound.

I will not pour the blood they bear,
Where thy pure altar flames:
I will not stain my lip in pray'r
With their polluted names.

The Lord my gracious portion lends,
And makes my cup o'erflow;
And thy strong pow'r the lot defends,
Which thy kind gifts bestow.

My lines are fall'n mid all delight,
A region large and fair:
Therefore I muse through wakeful night,
And praise the Lord's dear care.

I deem the Lord before me still,
At my right hand, to aid;
And joys my heart, unmov'd by ill,
And triumphs, undismay'd.

My flesh shall rest in silent hope,
For thou my soul shalt free,
Thine holy one's dark chamber ope,
And bid corruption flee;

And on the path of life shalt guide,
And to thy presence bring,

Where gladness pours its swelling tide,
And ceaseless pleasures spring.

NOTES.—"A Writing of David." The testimony of St. Peter (Acts ii. 25—30.) and St. Paul (Acts xiii. 35—37.) determines the purely prophetic and Messianic meaning of this Psalm.

To thee my soul would vow. There is, in the original, too great an abruptness in the change of address, to be easily transferred into English verse.

My bliss is naught but thou. This is the version of Symmachus and of the Chaldee Paraphrase, and is generally approved by the best among the modern commentators.

I will not pour the blood they bear. The Saviour, as the only high-priest, declares that he will not offer the drink-offerings of the wicked; which are viewed by the Almighty with the same detestation as if they were composed of the blood which their hands have shed, or that which the heathen sometimes mingled with wine in their sacrifices.

My lines are fall'n mid all delight. Measuring-lines were used in the division of lands. So Amos (vii. 17.)

"Thy land shall be divided by line."

My flesh shall rest in silent hope. This and the following verse, whether interpreted, in the primary sense, of the hope of David, or applied exclusively to the Redeemer, are ample evidence, unless the authority of the apostles be rejected, that both the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body, were known to the ancient Hebrews.

PSALM XVII.

O righteous Lord, hear thou the right,
And mark my pray'r's imploring cry:
From no false lips it takes its flight;
Then bow thine ear, and hear on high.

Send forth my upright doom from thee;
And shield the truth from tyrant pow'rs:
Thine eyes my heart's deep motions see,
See e'en in midnight's loneliest hours.

There, thou hast found no vain deceit:
I bade my mouth from guile recoil;

And through thy word I kept my feet
From man's dark paths of crime and spoil.

Oh, hold me in thy sacred ways,
Lest these weak footsteps slide and fall:
Thou answ'ring God, my voice I raise;
Incline thine ear, and hear my call.

Shew far abroad thy wondrous grace,
Thou, whose right hand is strong to bear
Through hostile hosts the chosen race,
Who own thy right, and trust thy care.

Guard, as the tender eye we guard;
Hide, in the shadow of thy wing;
From foul oppressors, bold and hard,
Who gird me close, in deadly ring.

With lux'ry swell'd, proud things they say;
My guiltless steps they compass round;
As lurking lions, hot for prey,
They watch, to tear me to the ground.

Rise, mighty Lord, their pride to quell;
And let thy sword my safety ope:
Let thy right hand the ranks repel,
Who seek on earth their loftiest hope;

Whose whole brief portion here is stor'd;
Whose veins o'erflow with prosp'rous health;
Whose offspring gay surround their board,
And share, at last, their fleeting wealth.

Far other, better wealth be mine,
Thy face in holy worlds to see;
Contented with that joy divine,
When I shall wake, and be like thee.

NOTES.—"A prayer of David."

Guard, as the tender eye we guard. The apple of the eye is proverbial in Hebrew, for an object defended or watched with the most prompt and minute attention. Thus, (Deut. xxxii. 10.)

"He led him about, he instructed him,
He kept him as the apple of his eye."

And, (Prov. vii. 2.)

"Keep my commandments, and live;
And my law, as the apple of thine eye."

Hide, in the shadow of thy wing. Merrick has here adopted the words of Bishop Ken;

"And keep, oh keep me, King of Kings,
Under thine own almighty wings."

Far other, better wealth be mine. I have not hesitated to express what seemed to me, beyond all question, the expectation of the Psalmist; that he should awake in a world of heavenly joy. The paraphrase of this passage by Dr. Watts, is the finest portion, except one, of all his Psalms.

"What sinners value, I resign;
Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine;
I shall behold thy blissful face,
And stand complete in righteousness.

This life's a dream, an empty show;
But the bright world, to which I go,
Hath joys substantial and sincere;
When shall I wake, and find me there?

O glorious hour, O blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God;
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasure of my soul.

My flesh shall slumber in the ground,
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound:
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,
And in my Saviour's image rise."

PSALM XVIII.

I will love thee, Lord my might;
Lord, my rock and castled height;
Thee, my God and rescuing guide,
Thee, the hold where safe I hide,
Thee, my shield and shelt'ring pow'r,
Thee, my hope's embattled tow'r.
Glorious Lord, to thee I cry,
And my foes before thee fly.

Snares of death beset my road;
Waves of ruin howling flow'd:
Snares of hell were thick around;
Death's dark nets bestrew'd the ground:
To the Lord, from thronging woes,
To my God my cry arose;
From his temple heard he all,
And his ear receiv'd my call.

Then the broad earth roll'd and reel'd,
And the trembling mountains peal'd;
Swell'd from far his fury's smoke;
Forth the vengeful flashes broke;
Kindling coals of wasting wrath
All along his downward path;
While the low'ring heav'ns he bow'd,
Trampling on the thick, dark cloud.

On the cherub's wing he pass'd,
On the pinions of the blast:
Darkness deep around him went;
Clouds and waters were his tent:
Rush'd the storm before his light,
Hail, and coals of fiery flight:
Broke from heav'n his thund'ring ire,
Hail, and coals whose flight was fire.

From his shafts the guilty fled,
From his lightnings hid their head:
Bare the waves' deep channels lay;
Earth's foundations rose to day;
At thy breath, Almighty Lord,
At thy wrath's rebuking word:
Then, mid many waters' roar,
He, from heav'n, my head upbore.

Many were my foes, and strong;
But the Lord repell'd their wrong:
Round they clos'd in trouble's day;
But the Lord was still my stay.

From their snares he brought me clear,
For he lov'd my heart sincere;
And, because my hands were clean,
Rich the Lord's reward hath been.

For I kept his righteous way;
From my God I dar'd not stray;
Ever looking on his will;
Clinging to his statutes still;
Upright in his sight I stood,
And my tempting sin subdued:
Thus, because my hands were clean,
Rich the Lord's reward hath been.

Good to bless the good art thou;
Upright tow'rds the upright brow;
Pure amidst the pure of heart;
Subtly thwarting subtle art:
Thou wilt save the mourning race,
And the eye of pride abase:
Thou illum'st my candle bright;
God shall make my darkness light.

I, by thee, an host assail'd,
By my God a rampart scal'd!
God in perfect paths shall guide;
For his word is pure and tried:
He his shelt'ring shield extends
Strong around his trusting friends:
Who, save him, is Lord divine?
Who a God and Rock, but mine?

Girds me he to stand, and speed,
Where his path of love shall lead,
O'er the hills, as sure and fleet,
As the hind's impatient feet.
Teaches he my arm to wield
Brazen bow and saving shield;
And, upheld by might from thee,
Feeble steps were firm and free.

Girt by thee, I well pursued;
Smote, and conquer'd, and subdued.
Fell to earth the rebel foe,
And the neck of pride was low:
Loud for aid in vain they cried;
To the Lord, and none replied:
While, as dust, their strength I beat,
Dust that strews the windy street.

Thou hast quell'd the hosts that warr'd;
Thou hast made me king and lord:
Unknown realms my name obey,
Strangers bow beneath my sway;
Strangers, trembling at my pow'rs,
Hide within their fastness tow'rs.
Lives the Lord, my Rock above,
Bless'd be my Deliverer's love!

God the righteous doom has sent;
Mighty nations low have bent:
O'er my foes my throne he rais'd:
Therefore shall the Lord be prais'd!
Mid the Gentiles I will sing
Him who saves his chosen king,
His anointed crowns with grace,
David and his endless race.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, from the servant of the Lord, from David, who spake to the Lord the words of this song, in the day when the Lord had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. And he said." This inscription is also found, except the first direction to the master of the music, in the second Book of Samuel (xxii. 1.) where the Psalm itself, with some variations, is likewise inserted. It is a triumphal strain, apparently composed by the king towards the end of his reign and of his life, in the fulness of his fervent gratitude.

Snares of death beset my road. It hardly needs to be said, that this and the following verses, with their splendour of imagery, are descriptive only of extreme distress and divine deliverance, without any design to represent the circumstances of either. The poet here beholds himself in the midst of deadly perils, and ready to sink into the dark dominion of the grave.

From his temple heard he all.

"Cœli tonitralia templa."
"The thund'ring temple of the sky." Lucret. Lib. i.

Then the broad earth roll'd and reel'd. The original has a similar alliteration.

While the low'ring heav'ns he bow'd. When the tempest approaches, the clouds seem to stoop toward the earth, and the sky itself to descend.

"Ruit arduus æther."
The lofty heav'n comes down.

This is the passage so nobly versified by Sternhold.

"The Lord descended from above, and bowed the heavens high;
And underneath his feet he cast the darkness of the sky.
On cherubs and on cherubim full royally he rode,
And on the wings of all the winds came flying all abroad."

Rush'd the storm before his light. The presence of the Lord himself is represented as full of light and glory; while the dark tempest of his anger sweeps on, before him and around him.

Hail, and coals whose flight was fire. Houbigant, Kennicott and Bishop Lowth doubt the genuineness of this repetition, "hailstones and coals of fire;" as not found in the parallel place in Samuel, nor in the Septuagint or the old Italic version. Bishop Horsley would rather omit the words, where they first occur.

Thou illum'st my candle bright. A favourite figure for happiness.
"How oft is the candle of the wicked put out!" (Job xxi. 17.)
"The candle of the wicked shall be put out." (Prov. xxiv. 20.)

Girds me he to stand and speed. The husbandman girded himself with a belt or girdle for his labour; the soldier for battle; and the messenger for his journey. Swiftness of foot was anciently esteemed one of the chief excellencies of a hero; and Homer ascribes it to Achilles. The Gadite champions are said (1 Chron. xii. 8.) to have been "as swift as the roes upon the mountains;" and Asahel (2 Sam. ii. 18.) "was as light of foot as a wild roe."

Brazen bow and saving shield. To be able to bend a bow of brass would be a proof of the highest physical force. Whether bows were ever made of brass, has been doubted; but a brazen sword has been found, which shews that the ancients had a mode of tempering brass to the hardness of steel. The translation which is here given is generally preferred to that which speaks of breaking the bow. Bishop Lowth, however, justifies the version, "a bow of steel."

Mid the Gentiles I will sing. St. Paul has cited this passage (Rom. xv. 9.) in such a manner that the Psalm must be, or at least may be, understood, in its highest sense, of the victory and enthronement of Christ.

PSALM XIX.

The heav'ns proclaim thy glory, Lord;
The starry skies thy skill record:
And day to day the anthem swells,
And night to night high knowledge tells.

Naught hides the word, or stays the strain;
Their music rings o'er land and main:
And utmost earth has heard the sound,
And unknown nature's utmost bound.

There, set on high, the gorgeous sun
From radiant halls exults to run;
A bridegroom from his nuptial place,
A strong man girded for the race.

From heav'n's far bound his journey goes;
At heav'n's far bound his circuits close;
And all is fair beneath his ray,
And all is warm with life and day.

The Lord's converting law is pure;
The Lord's enlight'ning witness, sure;
The Lord's enliv'ning precepts, right;
The Lord's commandment, radiant light;

The Lord's clean fear is endless youth;
The Lord's just judgments, spotless truth;
Far richer than the golden ore,
Far sweeter than the honey'd store.

Safe with such guides, thy servant treads;
And large rewards their path outspreads:
But who can count what steps may slide?
Oh, cleanse the sins that deepest hide!

But chief my suppliant soul restrain
From bolder crime's presumptuous reign:

So, upright shall I walk with thee,
So, guilt's dread blight forever flee.

The words that e'er my lips may part,
The thoughts that e'er may stir my heart,
Let none thy holy presence mock,
Lord, my Redeemer and my Rock!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David." It celebrates the two harmonious sources of divine knowledge; the works and the word of God.

And night to night high knowledge tells. In Hesiod's Theogonia, night and day are represented as addressing or saluting each other.

> Ὀβῖ νύξ τε καὶ ἠμέρα ἄσσον ἰοῦσαι
> Ἀλλήλας προσέειπον·—v. 747.
>
> Where, near approaching, mutual converse held
> The night and day.

Naught hides the word, or stays the strain. I have adopted the idea of Venema and De Wette; "theirs is not a speech or language, whose voice cannot be heard;" although I was much disposed to choose that of several other writers, so beautifully expressed in the paraphrase of Addison;

> "What though no real voice or sound
> Amidst their radiant orbs be found,
> In reason's ear they all rejoice,
> And utter forth a glorious voice."

The apostle Paul (Rom. x. 18.) applies the language of this verse to the propagation of the truth, through the messengers of Christ.

A bridegroom from his nuptial place. For, the sun is welcomed by all living things, as the bridegroom was greeted by his friends, when he came forth, clothed in splendid garments, and ready to enter on the festivities that followed the nuptials.

The Lord's converting law is pure. It is as if the poet had said, "not less is the glory of God revealed in his holy commandments." The transition is justified by this resemblance.

The Lord's clean fear is endless youth. He that feareth the Lord endureth forever.

But who can count what steps may slide? Bishop Bull adopted these words, in his last sickness, at the conclusion of a most solemn review of his life.

PSALM XX.

God hear thee in thy day of grief,
And Jacob's God defend;
Send from his holy place relief,
Support from Sion send;

Remember how to him aspire
Thine off'rings and thy pray'rs;
Grant thee thy heart's most bold desire,
And answer to thy cares.

In thy salvation's promis'd gift
E'en now we dare rejoice:
Our banners in God's name we lift;
God answer to thy voice!

Now know I that the Lord will fight
For his Anointed's band,
Hear from his heav'n's most holy height,
And stretch his strong right hand.

Some trust their chariots' wedg'd array,
And some their warlike steeds;
The Lord's great name is all our stay,
And God our vict'ry leads.

Chariot and steed, o'erthrown they fall;
We stand, and upward rise:
Save, Lord, and hear us when we call,
King of the earth and skies!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David." It seems to have been prepared to be sung by the assembled people, when the king went forth, at the head of his host, to war.

And answer to thy cares. They desire that the "counsel" of the monarch might be "fulfilled;" his designs crowned with perfect success.

Our banners in God's name we lift. The Maccabees are said to have received their name from the initial letters of the inscription on their banners, which in the Hebrew, are those of the sentence, (Exod. xv. 11.) "who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?"

PSALM XXI.

O Lord, in thy victorious might
Shall joy the rescued king:
Oh, how his voice of loud delight
Shall thy salvation sing!

His heart's desire, his lips' request,
Thy love would naught withhold;
But all his path with goodness bless'd,
And crown'd his brow with gold.

He ask'd for life: that love bestow'd
Eternal length of days;
And thy salvation spread his road
To kingly state and praise.

Blessing and bless'd, while ages fly,
He sees thy beaming face:
He cannot fall, O Lord most high,
Who gloried in thy grace.

Thy strong right hand shall reach thy foes;
And thy devouring ire
Shall wrap them round, as whirls and glows
The raging furnace fire.

Thy blast their early fruit shall chill,
And quench their wasted seed:
For tow'rds thy throne their pow'rless will
Had aim'd the rebel deed.

So shall their shoulder turn in flight,
When thou shalt draw the string:
Arise, O Lord, in thine own might,
And we thy might shall sing!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David." The people rejoice in the prosperity of their victorious and happy sove-

reign. Perhaps this Psalm was sung on some festival; possibly on the anniversary of the day when David was anointed, or when he ascended the throne. The ancient Hebrew interpreters judged rightly, however, in believing that it foreshewed also the praises of the Messiah.

Eternal length of days. As the gift evidently transcended the request, and the request was for length of life, it is impossible to avoid here the Messianic interpretation, which even Rosenmueller approves.

And quench their wasted seed. I have been willing to preserve whatever ambiguity the language of the original might here offer.

So shall their shoulder turn in flight. Bishop Horsley and some others favour the following translation of this passage: "thou shalt make them a butt," or target, "for thine arrows." The Lord is painted as a mighty and sure archer, at the sight of whose bended bow, according to the common version, his enemies flee away.

PSALM XXII.

My God, my God, afar, alone,
Why leav'st thou me unheard to groan?
My God, all day in vain I cry,
Nor night can soothe my weary sigh.

Yet thou art holy; and thy seat
Is where the songs of Israel meet:
With trust our fathers call'd thy name;
With trust, and thy deliv'rance came.

They were not sham'd; but I am base,
A worm, an outcast from my race;
The scorn of men whose impious crowd
Look on my pains, and mock aloud.

They shoot the lip, the head they wave;
"He trusted in the Lord to save;
Upon the Lord he cast his care;
Then, hear the Lord his fav'rite's pray'r."

Yet art thou he whose hand from naught
To life my infant members brought:

And when I clasp'd my mother's breast,
Thou wert my God, and thou my rest.

Oh, go not far, for trouble nears,
And none save thee in aid appears:
Strong bulls of Bashan gird me round,
And ramping lions toss the ground.

My limbs, my heart, melt fast away;
My strength departs, as dries the clay;
With parching tongue, I pant for breath,
Brought downward to the dust of death.

Dogs rage around, the vile, the fierce;
My bleeding hands and feet they pierce;
On my spent form with joy they stare,
And with the lot my vesture share.

Oh, go not far, my strength, my Lord:
Make haste to save me from the sword:
From dogs, from lions, shield my life,
And bear me from the bulls' wild strife.

I'll tell thy name with joyous song
Amidst my brethren's gath'ring throng:
Oh, praise and fear that name divine,
Thou seed of Israel's honour'd line.

He will not laugh when mourners mourn;
He will not mock with loathing scorn;
He will not turn his face away;
But hears the humblest lips that pray.

My song of praise for thee shall sound,
Where ransom'd saints adore around:
And where thy host in bliss shall bow,
Shall stand redeem'd my grateful vow.

There, the meek suff'rer shall rejoice,
Feast in thy love, and lift his voice:
The heart that pray'd, in praise shall soar,
And beat with life that dies no more.

Earth's utmost bounds shall hear and turn,
All tribes and realms thy worship learn;
For God the Lord all empire owns,
And rules amidst their thousand thrones.

All, all shall kneel: the rich of earth
Shall feast and bow in hallow'd mirth,
And they who down to dust draw nigh,
And scarce can stay th' expiring sigh.

A seed shall serve him, rising fair;
The Lord's own name their race shall bear:
And unborn lines of sire and son
Shall tell what deeds the Lord hath done.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician; to the Hind of the Morning; a Psalm of David." It is probable that this Psalm and others were to be sung to particular tunes or melodies, which sometimes received their names from other songs, to which they had been originally adapted. Such a tune may have been known by the name of "the Hind of the Morning;" an Oriental figure, perhaps, for the dawning day; and the name may have been derived from some words of the original song. There are Eastern poems or other writings, called "the Bright Star," "the Rosebush," "the Lion of the Forest."

This is a clear and undoubted prophecy of the suffering Saviour; and, as such, was sung, from the earliest ages, on the anniversary of the crucifixion. It is even difficult to believe that it could have had its origin from any circumstances in the life of David.

A Paraphrase of this Psalm exercised the talents and faith of Bossuet, in the intervals of ease which his last sickness allowed.

My God, my God, afar, alone. The words of which these are so faint a translation, are more than doubly consecrated by their utterance on the cross. How infinite was the spiritual anguish which wrung them from perfect patience!

They shoot the lip, the head they wave. These gestures were the common language of Eastern derision. Thus, (Job xvi. 10.)

"They have gaped upon me with their mouth,
They have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully."

So, in the reproof of Sennacherib (2 Kings xix. 21.)

"The daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee."

The history of the passion of our Lord is the best commentary upon all this description.

Strong bulls of Bashan gird me round Bashan was a country of rich pastures; and from its hills came a race of such fierce and mighty animals, as might well furnish a figure to represent cruel and insolent persecutors.

My limbs, my heart, melt fast away. Ovid has the same figure; (e Ponto, Lib. i. Ep. ii. v. 57.)

> "Sic mea perpetuis liquescunt pectora curis,
> Ignibus admotis ut nova cera solet."
> So melts my breast with ceaseless, anxious woe,
> As melts the wax before the fiery glow.

My strength departs, as dries the clay. The moisture of a vessel of clay, yielding to the heat in which it is placed by the potter, is compared with the departing vigour of the sufferer.

Dogs rage around, the vile, the fierce. The ferocity of the dogs in the East is mentioned by various travellers. Denon says that, in Egypt, he no longer recognized in the dog "the friend of man, the attached and faithful companion." "He does not know him whose house he protects; and devours his corpse without repugnance."

And bear me from the bull's wild strife. The measure has induced me to adopt the translation of De Wette, who supposes the animal here named to be a kind of wild ox or buffalo, and to correspond with the bulls of Bashan, which had been introduced before. Schultens and Michaelis, also, take it for a species of wild bull.

I'll tell thy name with joyous song. This sudden transition from the depths of agony to a joyful and exulting strain expresses aptly the triumphant expectation in which our Saviour at last commended his spirit to the Father.

PSALM XXIII.

The Lord is my shepherd; I ne'er shall have need:
He gives me my couch on the green, quiet mead;
He leads me beside the still waters; and brings
His wand'rer to pathways where righteousness springs.

And though through the valley of death's gloomy shade
Thou call'st me to journey, I am not afraid:
No ill shall befall me, with thee at my side,
Thy crook for my comfort, thy staff for my guide.

Thou spread'st me a banquet in eye of my foes;
Thou crown'st me with oil; and my cup overflows:
So, goodness and grace shall my footsteps entwine,
And God's holy dwelling shall ever be mine.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David."

The Lord is my shepherd. The frequency of this beautiful figure in the Scriptures makes it familiar to all; and its adoption by "the good Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep," renders this Psalm a peculiarly delightful expression of Christian confidence.

The valley of death's gloomy shade. Morier says, that "in the neighbourhood of Ispahan, there is a valley of unparalleled desolation and dreariness, which is called the valley of the angel of death." There is no reason, however, to imagine any allusion in the text to a place in Palestine, known by a similar name. Any extreme distress seems to be denoted; but especially the most awful and last. Bishop Horne observes that, "to apprehend the scenery in this verse, we must conceive the church militant and the church triumphant, as two mountains, between which lieth the valley of the shadow of death, necessary to be passed by those who would go from one to the other."

Thy crook for my comfort. The crook was used to sustain the lambs, and draw them near the flock.

Thou spread'st me a banquet. Here the figure is changed; and the saint is seen as a guest in the house of God, feasted with the abundance of divine blessings, and anointed with the fragrant oil, which was the token of honour and joy.

PSALM XXIV.

Earth is the Lord's, its treasur'd heaps,
And all its peopling throng:
He fix'd it on the mighty deeps,
And on the torrents strong.

Who shall ascend the Lord's fair hill?
Who near his shrine remain?
The clean of hands, the pure of will,
The soul nor false nor vain:

On such the Lord's rich blessing falls,
The just Deliv'rer's grace:
Such, God of Jacob, seek thy halls,
Seek thy most glorious face.

Lift high your heads, ye heav'nly gates;
Spread your eternal arch:

While his bright mansion op'ning waits
The King of glory's march!

Who is the King of glory? who?
The Lord, the strong in might:
The Lord, who ev'ry foe o'erthrew,
Strong in victorious fight.

Lift high your heads, ye heav'nly gates;
Ye doors eternal, spread:
While his bright mansion op'ning waits
The King of glory's tread!

Who is this King of glory? who?
The Lord of heav'nly hosts:
His kingly glory heav'n shall view,
And earth, through all her coasts.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." The occasion of its composition was probably the removal of the ark to Mount Sion. It seems to bear, in its construction, the evidence that it was chanted by alternate choirs, as the solemn procession ascended to the sanctuary. The division made by Bishop Horsley is the following. First, the chorus sing the opening stanza. The question in the second stanza is asked by a single voice; and the reply, including the last two lines of that stanza, and the first two of the next, is given by a second voice. The last two lines of the third stanza come from the chorus. A semi-chorus chants the next stanza; a single voice asks the question immediately succeeding it; and another voice replies. The same is repeated; and the last two lines of the Psalm are the conclusion by the whole choir.

Earth is the Lord's, its treasur'd heaps. This is cited by St. Paul. (1 Cor. x. 26.)

He fix'd it on the mighty deeps. So obvious a representation of the structure of the earth would very naturally be familiar in an early age; and yet it conveys, as a poetical expression, no contradiction to maturer science.

Lift high your heads, ye heav'nly gates. There is here something far higher than the earthly tabernacle. It is the ascension of the triumphant Saviour to the glory which he had with the Father, before the world was; and to the mediatorial throne. The noble paraphrase of Watts, in his Lyrics, will readily occur to the reader.

"There his triumphal chariot waits,
And angels chant the solemn lay;
'Lift up your heads, ye heav'nly gates,
Ye everlasting doors, give way!'"

Almost the very words of the Psalmist are employed by Callimachus in celebrating the approach of Apollo to his temple; and Mr. Merrick thinks it worthy of inquiry, whether they may not have been copied from this Psalm.

Αὐτὸν νῦν κατοχῆες ἀνακλίνεσθε πυλάων
Αὐταὶ δὲ κληῖδες ὀγὰρ Θεὸς ἠκέτι μακρήν.

Hymn in Apoll. v. 6.

Now ope, ye gates, to him your portals high,
And ope, ye bars; for lo, the God is nigh!

PSALM XXV.

ASPIRES my soul to thee, O Lord;
My hopes on thee, my God, repose:
BE never shame those hopes' reward;
Nor give the triumph to my foes.

COME shame on none that wait on thee,
But on the crowds that joy in ill:
DIRECT me thy just ways to see,
And lead me in thy perfect will.

EXPECTING thy deliv'ring feet,
My God, I hark from morn till eve:
FORGET not thou thy mercies sweet,
Nor e'er thine ancient favour leave.

GRACE is thine own; in grace forget
My rebel steps, my wand'ring youth:
HOLD me in kind remembrance yet,
And lead a sinner in thy truth.

JUST is the Lord; in judgment's hour
His hand shall guard th' afflicted cause:
KIND is the Lord; and kind his pow'r
Enfolds the heart that loves his laws.

LORD, for thy sake blot out my shame,
Though broad and deep its blackness be:

MINE be his lot who fears thy name,
And free and peaceful walks with thee.

No ill shall shake his household shrine;
His seed their own fair land shall hold;
ON such the faithful Lord shall shine,
Till all his secret truth be told.

PATIENT, I keep my Lord in sight;
He from the snare my feet shall free:
RETURN with thy bright mercy's light,
And all my dark'ning troubles see.

SEE how my heart's sad path they crowd;
See all my foes array'd for strife:
THEY hate with hatred fierce and loud:
Forgive my sin; redeem my life!

UP to thy throne my hopes arise;
Thy truth and grace my shield bestow:
WAITING on thee, my spirit cries,
Redeem thine Israel, Lord, from woe!

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." This is the first of the acrostical or alphabetic Psalms. In these, the verses are made to begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in their succession. It has seemed to me that the spirit of the original would best be preserved, by adhering to the same rule in the translation. There is, occasionally, in the Hebrew, an omission of a single letter in its order. The writer allowed himself this latitude; and the same liberty is found convenient in transferring the acrostic into our own language.

My rebel steps, my wand'ring youth. How few are there, who are not constrained, in remembrance of the thoughtlessness and ingratitude of their early days, to feel the peculiar emphasis of prayers like these!

Till all his secret truth be told. Secresy is the sure mark of close intimacy; and the secret of the Lord is his most endearing evidence of favour.

PSALM XXVI.

Judge me, O Lord most high,
For I in pureness tried
Have walk'd, believing thou wert nigh,
And shall not slide:
Search me, O Lord, and try,
Try thou my reins and heart;
For, from thy love and truth mine eye
Shall ne'er depart.

I sit not with the vain,
Nor tread mid crafty feet;
I hate the impious crowd profane,
The scoffer's seat:
I'll wash my hands from stain,
And compass round thy shrine,
And sing thy works in joyful strain,
Thy works divine.

Lord, I have lov'd the place
Where thou hast fix'd thy throne,
Where the bright glory of thy grace
Around me shone:
Not with the guilty race
Sweep thou my forfeit life;
Not with the men of brib'ry base,
And bloody strife.

So I in pureness tried
My peaceful way will go:
Be thou a Saviour at my side,
And mercy show:
While thou my step shalt guide,
I tread in even ways;
Till with thy people I abide,
And sing thy praise.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David."

Try thou my reins and heart. The Hebrew phraseology makes the reins or bowels the seat of the affections.

Lord, I have lov'd the place. Here, the version of Merrick is excellent;

> "How oft, instinct with warmth divine,
> Thy threshold have I trod!
> How lov'd the courts whose walls enshrine
> The glory of my God!"

I tread in even ways. These are the figurative expression of that clear guidance and blessed peace, which are afforded by the divine commandments.

PSALM XXVII.

The Lord is my salvation's light:
What brings my heart alarm?
The Lord is all my spirit's might:
Who, who, shall work me harm?

On came the wicked's rushing pow'r,
Th' oppressor and the foe:
They came, to trample and devour;
They fell, and grovell'd low.

Though hosts their camp against me spread,
My soul shall fear no ill;
Though war uprear its angry head,
My hope shall triumph still.

One boon my pray'rs from God request,
And trust his grace to give;
That in his temple's holy rest
I all my years may live.

There, I shall see his radiance fair,
And on his glory gaze;
And find my quiet refuge there
In evil's gloomiest days.

He bids me safe, in still repose,
In his pavilion lie;
He, on a rock o'er all my foes,
Exalts my head on high.

So I, within his house of pray'r,
Will grateful off'rings bring;
Fill with my strains that sacred air,
And God's high praises sing.

Hear thou my voice, that humbly cries,
And answ'ring favour speak!
"Seek ye my face!" my heart replies,
Thy face, O Lord, I seek.

Nor hide thy face, with wrathful brow,
Nor be my pray'r abhorr'd:
Till now my help, forsake not now,
My Saviour, and my Lord!

Father and mother may forsake;
The Lord shall then sustain:
Oh, guide me, Lord, thy way to take,
And let that way be plain.

For, many foes would hem my path,
And men of falsehood rise:
Oh, give me not to slake their wrath,
That breathes but threats and lies.

Had I not hop'd thy love to see,
Nor life's fair land depart!
Wait on the Lord, and he shall free;
Wait on the Lord, my heart!

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David."

Seek ye my face. The peculiarity of this passage in the original may justify the apparent abruptness, by which it is here imitated.

Had I not hop'd thy love to see. No supply of the ellipsis here can fail to diminish the strength of the exclamation.

PSALM XXVIII.

On thee I call, O Lord my Rock;
Oh, turn not, while I crave;
Lest, if thy silence seem to mock,
I journey tow'rds the grave.

Lest, with the nameless dwellers there,
I find my last long home,
See my spread hands, and hear my pray'r,
That seek thy sacred dome.

Nor snatch me hence with yonder crowd,
The men of secret sin,
Whose words of peace are fair and loud,
While treach'ry lurks within.

Reward them as their hearts have plann'd;
On them their treach'ry crown:
They have not own'd the Lord's high hand;
That hand shall sweep them down.

Prais'd be the Lord! He heard my voice,
The Lord, my buckler strong:
My trusting heart shall loud rejoice,
And loud my grateful song.

The Lord is his anointed's might:
Oh, save thy people true:
Refresh them with thy pure delight,
And bear them conqu'ring through.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David."

See my spread hands, and hear my pray'r. The gesture of extending the hands towards heaven in prayer, is natural and general. Æschylus speaks of

Χειροτόνους λιτὰς,

"Vows with outstretched hands."

Prais'd be the Lord! He heard my voice. If Psalms like this, in which fervent supplication for deliverance is followed by ascriptions

of praise, had really their origin in any special danger, temporal or spiritual, of the Psalmist, it must be supposed that, in most instances, they were composed after the deliverance. The poet would then bring before his imagination, in the liveliest manner, the peril from which he had been rescued, and his earnest cries for relief.

PSALM XXIX.

Give unto the Lord, ye sons of might,
  Honor and strength and fame;
Give unto the Lord his endless right,
His worship, of holy beauty bright,
  The honour of his name.

The voice of the Lord is on the deep;
  The God of glory calls:
The Lord is upon the waves' wild heap;
The voice of the Lord, its thunders sweep
  Through heav'n's re-echoing halls.

The voice of the Lord majestic takes
  O'er Lebanon its way:
The voice of the Lord the cedars breaks;
Like a leaping calf, old Sirion shakes,
  Like unicorns at play.

The voice of the Lord, mid flames it goes;
  It wakes the desert lair;
The voice of the Lord wild Kadesh knows;
The voice of the Lord bows down the does;
  And strips the forest bare.

His glory is told, where high he reigns,
  Whose throne can never cease;
The Lord, who rides on the wat'ry plains,
The Lord, who his people's strength maintains,
  Who gives his people peace.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." The Septuagint adds, "at leaving the tent;" from which Rosenmueller conjectures that the Jews were

accustomed to sing it at the close of the feast of tabernacles. It is a bold and sublime description of the glory and power of God, displayed in one of those strong tempests, which often sweep over the Holy Land.

Give unto the Lord, ye sons of might. The highest princes of the earth, and the mighty angels, may be supposed to be united in this form of address.

The voice of the Lord is on the deep. It is hardly necessary to say, that the thunder and the blast are represented as the awful voice of the Most High. Perhaps, the waters may here be the collected rains and clouds; but it is easy to imagine the tempest rushing from the Mediterranean.

The voice of the Lord the cedars breaks. The cedars of Lebanon are proverbial for their stupendous superiority amongst trees. Maundrell saw one of the few ancient ones that have remained till modern times, which was six and thirty feet in circumference.

Like a leaping calf old Sirion shakes. A double range of mountains stretch along the Northern extremity of Palestine; Lebanon or Libanus on the West, hanging over the Phœnician shores; and Antilibanus on the East, still loftier, and covered, on the summits, with perpetual snows. The latter was called by the Hebrews, Hermon; by the Amorites, Shenir; and by the Sidonians, Sirion. (Deut. iii. 9.)

The voice of the Lord wild Kadesh knows. Kadesh was a city on the borders of Edom; and Reland judges that the wilderness of Kadesh was that neighbouring wilderness of Sin, through which the Israelites journeyed.

The voice of the Lord bows down the does. Bishop Lowth thought this circumstance beneath the general loftiness of the Psalm, and would have rendered the passage, "bows," or "rends, the oaks;" but, in this instance, the correctness of his translation, as well as of his taste, may be doubted. The parturition of the hind is said to be peculiarly difficult; and the terror produced by the tempest is thus depicted by a figure as lively as the crashing of the cedars of Lebanon.

PSALM XXX.

I will extol, with grateful voice,
The Lord who rais'd me high;
Who would not bid my foes rejoice,
But heard my suppliant cry.

O Lord my God, thy love hath heal'd,
And brought me from the grave:
The yawning pit its mouth hath seal'd,
For thou wert nigh to save.

Sing to the Lord, ye saints his own,
Sing your Deliv'rer's praise;
And bending tow'rds his holy throne,
Your glad memorial raise.

One moment with his frown oppress'd,
We live beneath his ray:
Though weeping bide, an evening guest,
Joy comes at dawn of day.

I said, in my presumptuous sleep,
"I ne'er shall feel a shock;
Thy favour, Lord, hath fix'd so deep
My mountain's base of rock."

Thou hidd'st thy face: in fear and need,
To thee I made my pray'r;
"What gains the Lord, though I should bleed?
Can dust his truth declare?

Oh, hear, and send thy gracious aid!"
And thou that aid hast sent;
My step for triumph's dance array'd,
My mournful sackcloth rent;

And girt me round with grateful joy,
That I may ceaseless sing:
Thus shall thy praise my pow'rs employ,
O Lord, my heav'nly King!

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David; a Song at the dedication of the house." If this superscription contain an authentic account of the origin of the Psalm, it probably gives rather the date than the subject; unless we may suppose that the monarch commemorated, on that occasion, the pestilence which had been stayed at the spot on which the temple was built, the threshing-floor of Araunah.

We live beneath his ray. For a single moment, as it were, his chastisements may be felt, but our whole life is passed in the midst of his mercies; and in his favour is life eternal.

Though weeping bide, an evening guest. This figure is actually expressed by the original.

My mountain's base of rock. In the poetical language of the East, the mountain is the emblem of a state of dignity and safety.

My step for triumph's dance array'd. The sacred dance was the expression of the most exulting gratitude.

My mournful sackcloth rent. This was a dark cloth, made of goats' hair, and worn in the shape of a sack, descending as far as to the middle of the body.

PSALM XXXI.

In thee, O Lord, I trust;
Save me from shame and fear;
Save me, as thou art good and just;
And bow thy gracious ear.

Come to my help with speed;
Come with thy shelt'ring pow'r;
My refuge in mine hour of need,
My rock and fortress tow'r.

Lead me, for thine own sake;
And snatch me from the snare,
That, my unwary feet to take,
My foes unseen prepare.

With thee my succour stands,
Thee, my Redeemer tried:
Lord God of truth, to thy kind hands
My spirit I confide.

I hate the falsehood vain;
I trust alone the Lord;
And still my heart, in joyous strain,
Shall all thy love record;

That thou hast seen my woes;
That thou hast known my fear;
Nor shut me to my lurking foes,
But set my footsteps clear.

Have mercy, Lord! mine eye,
My soul, in sorrow pine;

And, spent with many a weary sigh,
My lonely years decline;

My bones are all decay;
My foemen taunting see;
My bosom friends turn cold away,
And they that mark me flee.

Forgotten, as the dead,
Spurn'd, like a broken vase,
I hear the frequent slander spread;
Fear sits on ev'ry face:

They join in dark accord,
My captive life to rend;
But I will trust in thee, O Lord,
And name thee God and Friend.

Thy hands my time assign;
Save me from hate and shame:
Let thy kind smile above me shine;
Save, for thy gracious name!

As I have call'd thee, save:
Let shame the vile surprise,
And silence cover, in the grave,
The lips that joy in lies;

That ope in slander proud
Against the pure of heart,
Mock his fair fame with insult loud,
Or steal with secret art.

How great thy goodness, Lord,
Laid up for thine with thee;
Wrought for the souls that trust thy word;
That all that live may see!

Thy presence holds them safe
From man's assailing pride:

Though warring tongues around them chafe,
Within thy tent they hide.

The gracious Lord be bless'd,
My city's tow'r and wall!
For when, by thronging terrors press'd,
I fled, and seem'd to fall;

Then rose my wild complaint,
"I perish from thine eye!"
But love the Lord, each suppliant saint!
He heard my doubting cry.

The Lord preserves the true,
And pays the deed of pride:
Stand, and your strength shall he renew,
Ye that his time abide!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David." The common supposition is, that it has reference to that period of his history, when he wandered in the wilderness, pursued by Saul, and betrayed by the Ziphites. Cardinal Fisher repeated this Psalm upon the scaffold.

My spirit I confide. Our Saviour expired, with the words of this verse upon his lips; and many a saint has echoed them from the bed of death. "Among our ancestors," says Dr. Clarke, "these words, as they stand in the Vulgate, were used by the sick when about to expire, if they were sensible; and if not, the priest said them in their behalf." Whatever superstition may have been linked with the Latin form, the words themselves are consecrated, for the departing spirit.

My city's tow'r and wall! This seems the thought; but some have imagined an allusion to the perils of David in the fortified town of Keilah; and Tate and Brady have not hesitated to introduce in their version the name of that city.

PSALM XXXII.

How bless'd the man, whose guilt is heal'd,
Whose crime the Lord hath veil'd and seal'd!
How bless'd, whose sins are all forgot;
The guileless spirit, cleans'd from spot!

Silent too long, by night, by day,
I groan'd my weary life away:
I pin'd beneath thy heavy hold;
And health's parch'd streams scarce faintly roll'd.

I spoke my sin; I cover'd naught;
I bar'd to thee my guiltiest thought;
I vow'd my heart to God to tell,
And thou forgav'st, where'er I fell.

For this, while yet thy grace is near,
The good man's pray'r shall seek thine ear:
So, when thy wrath's fierce billows roar,
They shall not climb his peaceful shore.

Thou art the hold, where safe I cow'r;
Thou shield'st my head, when perils low'r;
And thou wilt yet my path surround
With songs that thy salvation sound.

Mine eye your way shall search and lead:
Oh, be not like the senseless steed,
Whose mouth must feel the bit and band,
Whose foot contemns thy mild command.

Griefs throng around the head unjust,
And mercies crown the faithful trust:
Then let your songs, ye just, accord,
And joy, ye upright, in the Lord!

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." It might so fitly be the language of any penitent sinner, at any time, that a particular occasion need not be sought for its origin.

How bless'd the man whose guilt is heal'd! This passage is cited by St. Paul (Rom. iv. 6, 7.) to illustrate the doctrine of justification by faith.

I pin'd beneath thy heavy hold. So Job (xiii. 21.)

"Withdraw thine hand far from me,
And let not thy dread make me afraid."

The biographer of Archbishop Sancroft relates that the only expression like complaint, which was heard from him during his last illness, was in the words of this verse.

Mine eye your way shall search and lead. I have supposed, that in this verse the Lord himself is represented as speaking; but it may be the admonition of the Psalmist, addressed to his fellow-men.

Then let your songs, ye just, accord. Bishop Hare and Bishop Lowth would place this last verse at the beginning of the following Psalm.

PSALM XXXIII.

Rejoice, ye just; in God rejoice;
Praise well becomes the pious voice:
His praise from harp and psalt'ry ring,
And strike the lute of tenfold string.

Sing new the song, and loud and well
Pour out the lyre's melodious swell:
For God's pure word is truth and light,
And all his deeds are firm in right.

In judgment rules the Lord on high;
On justice rests his fav'ring eye;
While earth with wealth and blessing teems,
Beneath his bounty's kindly beams.

At God's high word the heav'ns were made;
One breath from him their hosts array'd:
He roll'd the waters, heap on heap,
And garner'd up the raging deep.

Let the broad world before him fear;
The tribes that throng this earthly sphere:
He spake, and all was fair and good;
He gave command, and firm it stood.

God breaks the heathen's proudest thought,
And makes their craftiest wisdom naught:
His counsel stands, forever fast;
His heart's design, while ages last.

Bless'd, who the Lord our God obey,
The chosen people of his sway!
From heav'n the Lord, with boundless ken
Looks o'er the busy sons of men;

From his high dwelling's holy place
Looks o'er his earth's assembled race,
And forms their countless hearts as one,
And knows the deeds their hands have done.

Kings are not sav'd by many an host;
Vain is the val'rous champion's boast;
And vain for flight the panting steed,
He shall not save by strength nor speed.

Lo, them that fear him eyes the Lord,
The souls that trust his gracious word:
Them shall he keep, when myriads die,
And feed mid famine's bitter cry.

We wait for God, our hope and shield;
And glorious joy that trust shall yield:
On us, O Lord, thy mercy be,
As we have fix'd our hope on thee!

NOTES.—This Psalm has no superscription.

His praise from harp and psalt'ry ring. The little which may be known of the Jewish instruments of music is collected in a dissertation of Pfeiffer, a translation of which was published in Robinson's Biblical Repository for 1835.

Sing new the song. This is often mentioned, as an indication of unusual joy, and as a more evident honour to the immediate occasion of praise.

He spake, and all was fair and good. There is here an allusion to the passage, "God said, let there be light, and there was light." Mr. Goode has strikingly expressed it;

"He spake—Lo! earth and skies
Their perfect forms disclose;
He bade the beauteous order rise,
And Order rose!"

PSALM XXXIV.

Amidst no change of joy or fear
Shall sink my grateful voice;
But boast in God, till sorrow's ear
Shall hearken, and rejoice.

Come, let our cheerful songs accord
To lift his name on high:
Distress'd and poor, I sought the Lord,
And he receiv'd my cry.

Expecting him, the eye grows bright,
And shame and sorrow flee;
Flee, as, at pray'r's deliv'ring might,
Far off they fled from me.

God's angels camp, a guardian band,
Around the humble just:
How bless'd their portion at his hand!
Oh, taste and see, and trust!

In God's pure fear with peace abide;
Want shall not reach his saints;
Kept, e'en while prowling far and wide,
The famish'd lion faints.

Listen and learn, ye young in days,
How holy wisdom fears:
Might ye not crave in prosp'rous ways
A joyous length of years?

Ne'er let your tongue with malice burn,
Ne'er be your lips untrue:
O'er strife and sin victorious turn,
And peace, sweet peace, pursue.

Peace smiles from God along the path
Where righteous pray'rs arise:

RED o'er the wicked flames his wrath,
And all their mem'ry dies.

SAVIOUR of ev'ry contrite breast,
He comes in days of need:
THOUGH foes the saints' sad path invest,
Yet not a limb shall bleed.

VENGEANCE, for all the scoffer's dreams,
Dread recompense shall claim;
WHILE God his servants' soul redeems,
And saves their trust from shame.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before Abimelech, so that he drove him away, and he departed." Abimelech was the hereditary name of the Philistine kings; and the history of this dissimulation and escape of David is found in the twenty-first chapter of the first book of Samuel. There is nothing that may absolutely prove or disprove the correctness of this superscription.

The present is the second of the acrostical Psalms.

God's angels camp, a guardian band. So the servant of Elisha saw the mountains around covered with chariots of fire and horses of fire. (2 Kings vi. 17.) The figure and the vision both express a delightful and a certain truth; that the angels are ministering spirits towards the heirs of salvation.

The famish'd lion faints. When strength, and pride, and fierceness, are vain, the weakest servant of God shall still be upheld.

PSALM XXXV.

Strive, Lord, with them that strive with me;
Let them that fight me fight at thee;
Gird on thy buckler and thy shield;
The swift, sharp javelin grasp and wield;
And come, in mercy and in wrath,
And close the fierce pursuer's path,
And say, to cheer my trembling heart,
How thou its strong salvation art.

Let shame and trouble end the strife
That aims to snatch my guiltless life;
In shame and trouble turn them back,
Who spread their snares around my track:
Strew them, like chaff along the blast,
While thy stern angel follows fast;
And dark and slipp'ry be the road,
Where thy stern angel on shall goad.

Let hidden ills their woe prepare,
And fall they by their own false snare;
While I my grateful tribute bring,
And loud the Lord's salvation sing,
Till all my frame exulting cry,
"Oh, who is like the Lord on high,
That saves the needy from the strong,
And rights the helpless suff'rer's wrong?"

With oaths of falsehood foul they stood,
And paid me murd'rous ill for good;
For I, above their painful bed,
The tears of cordial grief had shed;
My fasting watch in sackcloth kept,
As if a brother's woe I wept;
And bow'd to pour my inmost pray'r,
As if my mother's bier were there.

But when I pin'd, they gather'd by,
With mirth's, and hate's vindictive cry:
They gnash'd their teeth, the flatt'rers base,
That seek at affluent boards a place:
How long, O Lord, shall vengeance sleep?
Oh, save me from their lion leap;
That I may praise thee, oft and loud,
Amongst thy people's gladden'd crowd.

Nor yield them joy, whose causeless hate
Would wink and triumph o'er my fate;

Who secret fraud and malice speak
To stain the pure, to wound the meek;
And cry, with laughter's mocking mien,
"Aha, aha, our eyes have seen!"
Thou, too, hast seen, O God most high:
Oh stand, nor stand in silence, nigh!

Awake, arise, my Lord and God;
Lift in my cause thy vengeful rod:
Let thine own truth my doom decide;
Nor yield me to the boast of pride;
Nor let them cry, "aha, 'tis done!
Our heart's prophetic wish is won!"
And o'er my ruin fiercely say,
"We conquer'd and devour'd the prey!"

Let shame and trouble robe them all,
Who joy to hope my fatal fall;
While they that ask my just success
With shout and song thy name shall bless:
"Bless'd," let them cry, no more to cease,
"The Lord, who loves his servants' peace!"
And I will chant thy righteous praise,
From morn till evening's purple rays.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." Our Saviour has applied some words of this Psalm to himself (John xv. 25.); and although it was probably written during the persecution which David sustained from Saul and his court, yet the secondary reference to the Messiah gives it, throughout, a surpassing beauty and energy.

Strive, Lord, with them that strive with me. Hopkins has been happy here.

"Lord, plead my cause against my foes; confound their force and might;
Fight on my part against all those that seek with me to fight:
Lay hand upon the spear and shield; thyself in armour dress;
Stand up for me and fight the field, to help me from distress."

Till all my frame exulting cry. Every bone of the sufferer, his inmost frame, is represented as partaking of the joy of his deliverance.

Εἰ μοι γένοιτο φθόγγος ἐν Βραχίονι,
Καὶ χερσὶ καὶ κόμαισι, καὶ ποδῶν βάσει·

Eurip. Hec. v. 386.

Might my arm a voice awake,
Might my hands from silence break,
Ev'ry hair that crowns my head,
And my footsteps' ev'ry tread.

Would wink and triumph o'er my fate. So, in the Book of Proverbs (vi. 12—14.)

"A naughty person, a wicked man,
Walketh with a froward mouth.
He winketh with his eyes,
He speaketh with his feet,
He teacheth with his fingers;
Frowardness is in his heart."

Aha, aha, our eyes have seen! This is the interjection of high exultation over some event.

PSALM XXXVI.

My heart within me sighs,
Pond'ring the sinner's sin:
No fear of God illumes his eyes,
And falsehood hides within.

His soul deceiv'd awhile
Th' applauding world deceives;
And whisp'ring words of treach'rous guile,
The way of wisdom leaves.

E'en on his midnight bed
Dark thoughts his bosom throng:
He wakes, the paths of guilt to tread,
Nor fears its blackest wrong.

Far as the boundless sky
Thy mercy, Lord, ascends;
Far as the rolling clouds can fly,
Thy sacred truth extends.

Strong as th' eternal hills,
Thy justice holds its sway;
Deep as the depths old ocean fills,
Thy judgments' wondrous way.

Guard of all living things!
How precious is thy love,
That spreads the shadow of its wings
Our trusting race above!

Thy household's fulness sweet
Shall sate our longing dreams;
And thine own Eden's joyous seat
Shall pour refreshing streams.

For thine is life's pure rill;
Thine is the light of light:
Oh, give thy saints thy mercy still,
And give the righteous right.

Far be the foot of pride,
And far the wasting hand;
And lo! the false transgressors slide,
They fall, and ne'er shall stand!

NOTES.—For the chief musician, a Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord."

Far as the boundless sky. The Psalmist turns from this sad view of the wickedness of so many, to solace and strengthen himself with the contemplation of the eternal attributes of God, and the bliss reserved for the righteous.

And thine own Eden's joyous seat. Perhaps I have here wandered too much from the literal sense, allured by the occurrence of the word Eden or pleasure, to introduce an allusion to the earthly Paradise. But it is of little moment, as the heavenly Paradise is certainly described under these delightful figures.

PSALM XXXVII.

Against the sinner burn not thou,
Nor eye his bloom with envious mien;
Like meadow flow'rs it soon shall bow,
Or wither like the autumn's green:
But trust in God, and bear thee well,
And safe in peace and plenty dwell;

Make thy delight his heav'nly will,
And he thy heart's desire shall fill.

COMMIT to God thy cheerful way,
And thou shalt see thy purpose done;
Thy truth shall lighten as the day,
Thy judgment as the noontide sun:
DIRECT thy silent trust on high,
And wait the arm that rules the sky;
And envy ne'er the prosp'rous road
That guilty pride and craft have show'd.

ESCAPE from passion's jealous flame,
Nor lift for ill thy wrathful hand;
The proud shall perish in their shame,
The saints shall hold their promis'd land:
FOR yet a little, fleeting while,
And thou may'st vainly seek the vile;
While plenteous peace shall smile around
The meek believer's guarded ground.

GNASH they their teeth, the impious host,
Against the just their counsels raise;
God laughs to scorn their fruitless boast,
And sees the dawn of vengeance blaze:
HIGH be their sword, and bent their bow,
To bring the righteous suff'rer low;
Their sword shall pierce their own false heart,
Their shiver'd bow let fall its dart.

IN righteous gains, though poor and small,
Is wealth beyond th' oppressor's gold;
Th' oppressor's arm shall pow'rless fall,
And God the righteous step uphold:
KNOWS he and loves the good man's ways,
And guards him on till endless days:
O'er such no cloud shall peril bring,
And famine sees them feast and sing.

Like smoke that o'er the altar fumes,
Where bleeds the lamb, and bleeding burns,
So time the hoarding wretch consumes,
While love's free gift in wealth returns:
Most strong to curse, most kind to bless,
God leads the just, and gives success;
And though they fall, they yet shall stand,
And smiling trust th' Almighty hand.

Ne'er, while from youth to age I trod,
For all that path was mine to tread,
Saw I the righteous left of God,
Or his lorn offspring beg for bread:
O'er bounteous heads all favour glows;
Down to their seed the blessing flows;
And if from ill thy footstep cease,
Forever shall thy house be peace.

Peace dwells in ev'ry righteous home;
For God's strong shield his saints defends:
His light is there when troubles foam;
On, e'en to death its gleam descends:
Quell'd by his storms, th' ungodly line,
Like blasted branches, with'ring pine,
While, on the land by promise bless'd,
The upright feet have glorious rest.

Rich words distils the good man's voice;
There truth and honey'd wisdom glide:
The Lord's pure law is all his choice,
His patient footsteps never slide:
Silent, the wicked watch his way,
And fain would rise to seize and slay;
God saves him from their ambush'd pow'r,
And saves in judgment's stormier hour.

Trust thou the Lord and his command;
So, when the bold transgressor dies,

Thou, lifted in thine own fair land,
Shalt see, as saw my wond'ring eyes:
Upward I saw him spread his fruit,
And fix below his stately root;
I pass'd, and all the scene was bare;
I look'd, nor one poor leaf was there.

Watch thou the path, where walks the just;
Peace hovers o'er his holy end;
While, mid the mass of common dust,
The haughty seed their ruins blend:
Yet not his arm deliv'rance brings;
His hope to God's strong succour clings;
And as he hopes, so God shall give,
And, safe from foes, his soul shall live.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." It is the third of the acrostical Psalms, and forms a noble didactic poem. Its promises are understood as having their fulfilment in eternity, even by those who commonly reject such interpretations of the Old Testament.

Like smoke that o'er the altar fumes. As the victims were taken from the fattest of the flock, so the guilty, in their utmost prosperity, are most ready for destruction.

I pass'd, and all the scene was bare. This is the reading of the Septuagint and Vulgate, and seems preferable to the Hebrew, "he passed."

Upward I saw him spread his fruit. Let the reader turn to the vision of Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel. (iv. 10—14.)

PSALM XXXVIII.

Lord, not in wrath my sin reprove,
Nor let thy stroke in vengeance move;
For, fast and deep, thy shafts descend,
And low beneath thine arm I bend.

No healthful spot thine anger spares;
No limb but sin its lifestring tears;
High o'er my head my crimes have pass'd;
I cannot bear a load so vast!

My fest'ring wounds, with loathsome breath,
Spread wide the tale of sin and death:
I bow, I sink, and all the day
I mourn along my dismal way.

For, deep within, I feel the pest;
There is no spot of health or rest:
All faint and crush'd, aloud I cry,
And thou hast heard each anguish'd sigh.

Gone the firm heart, the arm of might;
Gone from mine eye its pleasant light;
And love looks on with sad amaze,
And brethren stand afar to gaze.

They spread their snares, who seek my life;
They think of fraud, and utter strife;
While, like the deaf, I close mine ear,
And, like the dumb, nor chide nor hear.

For I will wait thy shelt'ring wing;
Oh, answer soon, my God, my King;
Lest thy proud foes and mine shall see,
Shout o'er my fall, and mock at thee.

I sink, all faint with ceaseless pain;
I tell my sin, and mourn its chain;
Yet swell my foes' blaspheming throng,
And give the righteous bitter wrong.

They hate me for my upright vow;
O Lord my God, depart not thou!
Be near me in my hour of need;
My Lord, my Saviour, come with speed!

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David, for remembrance." Perhaps it received this title on account of the design, in the words of Grotius, "to inculcate upon David a perpetual memory of his sin and his pardon." Perhaps it expresses, however, the thought that such a prayer would, in the midst of affliction, "come up as a memorial before God."

One of the heroes of the American revolution, General Herkimer, who fell in the bloody fight at Oriskany, was laid near the field after

he had received his mortal wound; and there, calmly and fervently read this Psalm, and died.

Lord, not in wrath my sin reprove. The beginning corresponds with that of the sixth Psalm, except in a single word.

No limb, but sin its lifestring tears If bodily sufferings are here described, which is very doubtful, they are all traced to the original cause, our common sinfulness.

And love looks on with sad amaze. The pathetic complaints of Job will be readily remembered. Hardly any thing could be more dreadful than the lot of one who was banished by leprosy or some other unclean and loathsome disease, from the society of his nearest friends, when he needed it most.

PSALM XXXIX.

I said, "my mouth shall hold its guard;
My lips shall feel their portals barr'd;"
And while the impious hearken'd round,
Not e'en thy praise could wake a sound;
Till the pent fire a passage broke,
And thus my tortur'd bosom spoke.

"Lord, let me know my length of days,
And where shall end these weary ways!
Lo, thou hast made my years a span;
So frail the surest step of man;
While here he walks mid shadows vain,
And piles for unknown hands his gain.

Where, then, shall hope in safety wait,
Where, but at mercy's heav'nly gate?
Oh, save me, Lord, from sin and shame,
Nor let thy foes revile thy name;
But mid my griefs, I meekly bow,
For none has struck the blow but thou.

Yet, God of grace, remove thy stroke;
Beneath thy hand my strength is broke:
Oh, when thou send'st the chast'ning doom,
How swiftly fades our beauty's bloom,

How sinks our glory and our toil,
As wastes the moth his fragile spoil!

Lord, hear my cry with fav'ring ears;
In pity mark my swelling tears;
While, like my fathers, to the dead,
A pilgrim stranger, on I tread:
A little while, my strength restore,
Ere men shall see my face no more!"

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, for Jeduthun, a Psalm of David." Jeduthun is mentioned in the first book of Chronicles, as one of the leaders of the music of the temple.

For none has struck the blow but thou. Calvin is said to have often uttered these words, in his last illness.

A pilgrim stranger on I tread. How beautifully does this harmonize with the statement of the apostle! "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." (Heb. xi. 13, 14.)

PSALM XL.

I watch'd and waited for the Lord,
And he receiv'd my cry;
And brought me from the dungeon's ward,
And rais'd me from the pit abhorr'd,
And set me up on high.

High on a rock he set my feet,
And taught my voice to sing
A new-made song, so loud and sweet,
That hosts shall hear it, and repeat
The praises of my King.

How bless'd to seek his shelt'ring place,
Nor turn at falsehood's call!
O Lord my God, thy works of grace,
Thy thoughts of love, oh, who can trace,
Oh, who can count them all!

Thou wilt not victims burn'd for guilt,
The guiltless and the dumb;
Thou wilt not votive blood-drops spilt,
But op'st mine ears to all thou wilt,
And therefore, Lord, I come.

I come to follow that fair chart,
Thy sacred word and will;
'Tis deep engrav'd within my heart;
My lips shall all thy truth impart,
And all thy praise fulfil.

My lips thy truth and praise shall tell,
Where all thy people throng:
Thou know'st, O Lord, how boldly swell,
When on thy saving strength they dwell,
My heart, and harp, and song.

Then, Lord my God, withhold not now
Thy stedfast truth and love!
More than the hairs that shade my brow,
The griefs beneath whose load I bow,
And scarce can look above.

My sins around my bosom cling,
And droops my captive life:
Oh, come with speed thy mercy's wing,
Haste, my Deliv'rer and my King,
And end this anxious strife.

Let shame and trouble whelm them all,
Who hem my guiltless track:
Let them who ask my fatal fall,
And loud "aha!" in insult call,
Be chas'd in ruin back.

Joy be with them who joy in thee,
Till "God be prais'd!" they say:
And I, though poor and lone I flee,
Will hope the Lord's kind arm to see:
My God, make no delay!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David." In the epistle to the Hebrews, a portion of it is cited as the words of the incarnate Saviour. The confessions form no objection to this interpretation, since he bore the sins of men, and bowed under the burden.

But op'st mine ear to all thou wilt. The Septuagint has, "a body hast thou prepared me;" which is adopted by the apostle. (Heb. x. 5.) But it seems not essential to the argument in that place.

Let shame and trouble whelm them all. A few words here are almost the same with a passage in the thirty-fifth Psalm.

PSALM XLI.

How bless'd the man who loves the poor!
The Lord shall keep his soul secure,
Shall save him in the evil day,
And guard him on his dang'rous way.

Thy blessing o'er his home shall smile,
And shield his breast from hostile guile,
And, when he bows his sick'ning head,
Shall comfort's downy pillow spread.

Such mercy, Lord, on me bestow,
And heal my soul from guilt and woe;
For now my foes blaspheming cry,
"When shall his name behind him die?"

And if they come, and mark my pain,
Their treach'rous words are cordials vain;
Their inmost heart has stor'd deceit,
And spreads it through the swarming street.

Their whispering lips of evil speak;
They boast the woes they long to wreak;
"Beneath an iron grasp he lies;
From that sad bed no more to rise!"

E'en he who seem'd my bosom guide,
So long belov'd with friendship tried,

So welcome to my household bread,
He lifts his heel, to stamp my head.

Lift thou that head, thou gracious Lord,
With strength to yield their dread reward:
And, since not yet their triumph rings,
I know thy love around me clings.

Thou keep'st my blameless steps aright;
In peace I stand beneath thy sight:
Bless'd be the Lord, our Israel's rest,
Forever and forever bless'd!
Amen. Amen.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David."

He lifts his heel, to stamp my head. This passage is mentioned by our Saviour (John xiii. 18.) in such a manner as to confirm the opinion that, in all the Psalms, we may justly trace his doctrine, his history, or the history of his people. It is applied to Judas Iscariot.

With strength to yield their dread reward. A wish which, under the Gospel at least, would be wrong in a private individual, might be right in an injured king, and was sublimely just in the rejected Messiah.

Amen. Amen. The conclusion of the first of the five books, into which the Psalms were divided by the Jews, is designated by this form of doxology.

PSALM XLII.

As the hart for cooling springs
Pants amidst the sultry chase,
So my spirit, King of Kings,
Pants for thy refreshing grace:
God, the living God, for thee
Thirsts and pines my fainting breast:
When shall I thy glory see?
When in thy fair presence rest?

Tears have fed me, day and night,
While, beneath the mocking tone,

"Where is now thy God of might?"
Pours my heart its grief alone:
For, amidst the joyous throng,
Once within thy courts I trod,
With the voice of festal song,
With the people of my God.

Wherefore bow'st thou down, my soul,
Sighing with thy load of care?
Why within my bosom roll
Threat'ning waves of dark despair?
Trust in God, and wait his hour,
Though it linger yet a while;
I shall praise his faithful pow'r,
Praise my God's preserving smile.

Lord, for thee my soul has sigh'd,
Looking tow'rds thy holy place,
Here, from Jordan's distant tide,
Here, from Hermon's humbler base:
Deep to deep is calling hoarse;
Far the torrent troubles spread;
And their billows' gather'd force
Bursts above my sinking head.

Yet the Lord shall shine by day,
Yet by night shall fill my strain:
To the Lord, my life, I pray,
To the Lord, my rock, complain;
Why, forgotten, roam I here,
While the shout pursues my flight,
Piercing, like a blade, mine ear,
"Where is now thy God of might?"

Wherefore bow'st thou down, my soul,
Sighing with thy load of care?
Why within my bosom roll
Threat'ning waves of dark despair?

Trust in God, and wait his hour,
Though it linger yet a while;
I shall praise his faithful pow'r,
Praise my God's preserving smile.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, an Ode of the sons of Korah." From the posterity of Korah, the conspirator against Moses, a company of singers and musicians was formed in the days of David, for the service of the temple. To these are ascribed ten Psalms, almost all of them amongst the most beautiful in the whole collection; and they were probably the composition of some one or more of the chief persons of this family. Bishop Patrick, however, assigns some of them to David.

This Psalm is apparently the lamentation of a pious Israelite, afar from the sanctuary of God, and in the midst of enemies. Or else, it is the language of a devout spirit, in a season of inward conflict and anxiety. This last application may at least be allowed to a Christian; and it was in such a sense that Bullinger made this Psalm his dying words.

Tears have fed me day and night. So Ovid,

"Cura dolorque animi lachrymæque alimenta fuere."
Care, grief and tears sad nourishment supplied. Met. L. 10.

Threat'ning waves of dark despair. The word denotes originally a noise and roaring like that of the waves, and is very expressive of the conflict of troubled emotions.

Here, from Hermon's humbler base. Hermon or Anti-Libanus, with its whole lofty range, is called humble, in comparison with the holy majesty of Mount Sion. The former embraced the sources of the Jordan.

PSALM XLIII.

Judge me, God whom worlds obey,
Wage my war and guard my life,
From the sinner's cruel sway,
From the hosts of fraud and strife:
Thou art still my God and tow'r;
Wherefore roam I thus forlorn,
Cast from thine embracing pow'r,
List'ning to th' oppressor's scorn?

Send, oh send thy truth and light;
Let them lead my weary feet,

To thy mountain's holy height,
To thy temple's tented seat:
There, before thine altar's fire,
At my joy's celestial spring,
I will sweep the sounding lyre
To the praises of my King.

Wherefore bow'st thou down, my soul,
Sighing with thy load of care?
Why within my bosom roll
Threat'ning waves of dark despair?
Trust in God, and wait his hour,
Though it linger yet a while;
I shall praise his faithful pow'r,
Praise my God's preserving smile.

NOTES.—This Psalm is without superscription; and, from the nature of its contents, and especially the repetition of the same chorus, is undoubtedly to be regarded as a continuation, if not as a part, of the preceding. In many manuscripts, it is in fact connected with it, as one continuous ode. The last act of St. Ambrose was to dictate an exposition of this Psalm, which he left imperfect.

There, before thine altar's fire. The utmost joy of the pious Hebrew must have been, to present his sacrifice at the altar of burnt-offering. Our thoughts ascend naturally from thence to the spring of all joy, the presence of God above.

PSALM XLIV.

Lord, we have heard from ancient years,
Our fathers taught our infant ears,
Thy wonders wrought in ages old,
And on, through rolling ages told;

How, from the land thy promise gave,
Thine arm the heathen banners drave,
And deep the root of Israel cast,
And spread his branches to the blast.

Not his own sword the battle fought,
Not his own hand deliv'rance wrought;

Thy smile above his armies shin'd,
And they were strong, for thou wast kind.

Still, God of hosts, art thou our King;
Oh, still thine Israel's succour bring:
Through thee we push the wav'ring foe,
Through thy strong name we tread them low.

I will not trust my bow or blade;
Thou, thou hast driv'n their bands dismay'd:
In God our boast on high we raise,
And shout our Saviour's endless praise.

But thou hast cast thy people off,
And they must hear th' oppressor's scoff;
Thou lead'st no more our weak array;
We flee, we fall, a helpless prey.

Like flocks for food, our tribes have bled,
Or slaves in distant realms are led;
To Gentile hands, and not for gold,
The Lord his chosen race has sold.

The shout of scorn is ringing near;
The heathen's laugh is in our ear;
They make our name their proverb's strain,
And shake the head in loud disdain.

Shame bows mine eye, where'er it turns;
With shame my cheek unceasing burns;
Because the foes of God rejoice,
The bold blasphemer lifts his voice.

So dark has come our weary lot;
Yet is not, Lord, thy name forgot;
Thy cov'nant's bond we ne'er belied,
Nor turn'd our heart or feet aside.

Oh, could we e'er that name disown,
And spread our hands to gods unknown,

Where slept the eye, whose piercing view
Looks all the soul's deep secrets through?

Yet, crush'd we lie where dragons tread;
And death's dim shades are round us spread:
All day for thee we yield our life,
Like flocks that wait the slaught'ring knife.

Awake, O Lord: why sleeps thine eye?
Arise, nor cast us off to die!
Why hides thy smile its golden light,
While scorn and sorrow load the night?

In dust our soul bows down and grieves;
Prone to the earth our body cleaves:
Oh, for thine own dear mercy's sake,
To our redemption, Lord, awake!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, an Ode of the sons of Korah." It bears the signs of an age of national distress; but was probably written before the Babylonian captivity.

Our fathers taught our infant ears. The custom was expressly commanded, that the father should relate to his children the wonderful interpositions of God on behalf of the seed of Abraham. So the seventy-eighth Psalm;

> "He established a testimony in Jacob,
> And appointed a law in Israel,
> Which he commanded our fathers,
> That they should make them known to their children."

But thou hast cast thy people off. From the language of praise for ancient mercies, the Psalmist sinks, with a transition full of feeling, to his lament over the calamities of his nation. Well may this Psalm be often upon the lips of the Jews, in their present, long dispersion through all lands.

To Gentile hands, and not for gold. The Lord is represented as a merchant, esteeming his people of so little value as to sell them at a price which was not to be named; or even to part with them for naught.

Yet is not, Lord, thy name forgot. They had not apostatized to the service of idols. It could not enter the thoughts of the Psalmist to deny that their calamities were the issue of their sins.

Yet crush'd we lie, where dragons tread. The original word is employed to designate any monstrous and terrible animals, whether of the land or sea. Here, these are probably introduced, as descriptive of a wild and dangerous region, the image of deep adversity. Mr. Green sup-

poses a literal meaning: "the miserable captives were sent by their conquerors, to people and cultivate the desolate parts of Assyria, which were the habitation of serpents and other noxious reptiles, whose sting and bite were mortal."

All day for thee we yield our life. St. Paul (Rom. viii. 36.) adopts these words as a general illustration of the state of the persecuted servants of God.

PSALM XLV.

My heart o'erflows its gushing fount,
  My tongue makes haste to sing,
And, like a scribe's swift pen, recount
  High praises to my King.

Thou fairer than the sons of man,
  Thy lips bedew'd with peace,
So bless'd of God ere time began,
  So bless'd when time shall cease!

Gird on thy thigh thy conqu'ring blade,
  Majestic Prince of might!
Ride prosp'ring on, in pomp array'd,
  Meek Lord of truth and right!

Thy strong right hand shall point thy path
  Where vict'ry's terrors speed;
And banded hearts that dare thy wrath
  On thy sharp shafts shall bleed.

Forever and forever sure,
  Thy throne, O God, remains;
A sceptre firm, while worlds endure,
  Thy righteous sceptre reigns.

Truth was thy love, and sin thy hate,
  And therefore on thy head
Hath God, thy God, in matchless state,
  The oil of gladness shed.

Thy robes the aloes rich perfumes,
And myrrh, and cassia sweet;
And songs from iv'ry palace-rooms
Thy princely presence greet.

And maids, of many a royal line,
With thy belov'd one stand,
Where, crown'd from Ophir's distant mine,
She smiles at thy right hand.

Daughter of kings, incline thine ear;
Forget thy father's hall:
The King, thy Lord, has thee most dear;
Oh, love him more than all!

Tyre's glitt'ring tow'rs their gift shall send,
Thy nuptial pomp to grace;
And Gentile lords shall lowly bend,
And sue thy fav'ring face.

Within, how fair the queenly bride!
In robes with gold inwrought,
She comes all glorious to thy side,
By circling virgins brought.

With songs and joy thy courts they tread,
And heirs of royal birth
To ev'ry land thy race shall spread,
And rule the happy earth.

Beyond thy fathers' storied page
Shall glow thy children's day;
And tribes and realms, from age to age,
Shall join my votive lay.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician on the six-stringed harp, an Ode, a Song of Love, by the sons of Korah." The mystical interpretation of this Psalm, as addressed to the Messiah, and describing his union with his Church, was adopted by the ancient Jews, and is confirmed in the epistle to the Hebrews. (i. 8, 9.) In the words employed by Bishop Patrick, "behold, a greater than Solomon is here." Bishop Horsley has proved, that it has not even a primary reference to Solomon.

The oil of gladness shed.

"Postquam oleo gavisa cutis."

Statius, Theb. L. 6. v. 847.

When now with gladd'ning oil the skin rejoic'd.

Thy robes the aloes rich perfumes. Modern manners give us no conception of the costliness of perfume with which the princes of the East were sprinkled, on occasions of pomp and festivity.

And songs from iv'ry palace-rooms. The exact meaning of this passage is not clear; but that which is here given is plausible and elegant.

Ahab had an ivory palace (1 Kings xxii. 39.); and the prophet Amos (iii. 15.) speaks of houses of ivory. Their chambers were probably much adorned with that substance, richly inlaid; which thus gave a name to the whole edifice. Menelaus, in the Odyssey (iv. 72, 73.) has a palace of this description.

Δώματα ηχηεντα
Χρυσοῦ τ'ηλέκτρου τε, καὶ ἀργύρου ηδ' ελέφαντος·

Sounding domes on high,
Silver and gold, fine gold and ivory.

Tyre's glitt'ring tow'rs their gift shall send. Tyre is the representative of the wealth and commerce of the world.

By circling virgins brought. It was amongst the nuptial customs of those lands in which the scene of this description is found, that the bride should thus be led forth from the house of her father, with her companions, and conducted by the bridegroom and his associates to his own home, with the sound of music and song.

PSALM XLVI.

God is our refuge and our tow'r,
Our aid forever near:
Though earth should quake, and ocean low'r,
Yet shall not Sion fear.

Though mountains, sever'd from the shore,
Fall thund'ring through the deep;
Though wild the waters rave and roar,
And shake the rocky steep.

A gentler stream, with gladd'ning tide,
Shall God's fair city lave,
And, where the Highest's tents abide,
Shall send its silver wave.

God, in her midst, with guardian might,
Defends her lowliest bow'r;
And sure and soon as morning's light,
God sends her succ'ring hour.

The heathen rag'd, but earth's wide coasts
His voice dissolves with fear:
Our shelter is the Lord of Hosts,
And Jacob's God is here.

Oh, come, his peaceful vict'ries know,
His wonders near and far;
He cuts the spear, he breaks the bow,
He burns the warlike car.

Hark, how he quells the heathen's boasts,
And sways the earthly sphere:
Our shelter is the Lord of Hosts,
And Jacob's God is here.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Song of the sons of Korah, with virgin voices." This translation of the last word is, however, no more than one conjecture amongst several. It is generally known that this Psalm was the favourite one of the indomitable Luther.

Though mountains sever'd from the shore. The thought of Horace is similar;

"Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ."
Carm. iii. 3, 7.

Though nature fall, in ruins spread,
Her ruins strike a fearless head.

Shall send its silver wave. See Isaiah, (viii. 6.)

"This people refuseth
The waters of Shiloah that go softly."

PSALM XLVII.

O all ye nations, clap your hands,
And let your shouts of vict'ry ring,
To praise the Lord of all your lands,
The broad creation's awful King.

He treads the realms beneath our feet,
  He breaks the hostile armies down,
And gives and guards his chosen seat,
  The home of Jacob's old renown.

God is gone up with shouting throngs;
  Before him peal'd the trumpet's call:
Oh, sing to God with lofty songs;
  Sing praises to the Lord of all!

Oh, sing to God a royal strain,
  To earth's high King a raptur'd cry:
God o'er the nations spreads his reign,
  God lifts his holy seat on high.

The heirs of many a Gentile throne
  With God's and Abraham's seed adore:
The shields of earth are all his own,
  And high as heav'n his glories soar.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of the sons of Korah." Whether it was composed for the dedication of the temple, or on any other festival occasion, it is impossible to decide; but it can hardly be read, without being referred, in its highest allusion, to the ascension of the Saviour.

God is gone up with shouting throngs. The Son of God, returning to his heavenly throne, with all the pomp of a conqueror, is welcomed by the songs and harps of heaven, and shall soon receive the praises of all the earth.

PSALM XLVIII.

Great is the Lord, and well he waits
  The song of worthiest skill,
Where God's own city lifts her gates,
  Where tow'rs his holy hill.

The joy of earth, from far descried,
  Is Sion's beauteous height,
Where gleams along her northern side
  Thy fortress, King of might!

The Lord is known within her tow'rs,
Of old their bulwark fast:
Kings, like the storm, led on their pow'rs,
And, like the storm, they pass'd.

They saw, they wonder'd, fear'd and fled:
So travailing mothers wail;
So burst the sails for Tarshish spread,
Beneath thine eastern gale.

Our eyes have seen, what once was told,
Of God's embattled wall:
The Lord of Hosts has there his hold,
And not a stone shall fall.

O God, we think thy goodness o'er
Within thy temple dear;
And, like thy name, our praise would soar,
Till earth's wide bounds shall hear.

A sceptre just thy hand sustains;
A shield thy judgments bring:
Let Sion lift her loudest strains,
Let Judah's maidens sing!

Go round the tow'rs on Sion's mount,
Mark how they greet the sun;
Her palace portals note and count,
Her bulwarks, one by one;

And tell to ev'ry future day,
So God, our God, defends;
So guides his people's peaceful way,
Till death in vict'ry ends.

NOTES.—"A Song and Psalm of the sons of Korah." It is a beautiful picture of the security of the church of God.

Where gleams along its northern side. Reland is of opinion, that the Mount Sion, in strictness, was in the southern part of Jerusalem; but that it was by far the highest part, and sustained upon its northern side the chief portion of the city. The southern side of this mount was surrounded by a high wall and a deep valley; but the northern

descended towards the inferior hill of Acra, with all the magnificence of a stately metropolis. Mount Moriah, also, the site of the temple, is sometimes known as a part of Mount Sion, and called by the same name; and it was north-west from the hill itself. Sion, however, "the city of the great King," whether with or without Moriah, is described in this verse; and Lightfoot actually makes it the northern hill.

So burst the sails for Tarshish spread. Tarshish is supposed to have been in Spain. As this voyage required the largest vessels that were then known, all vessels of great size came to be called ships of Tarshish The east wind is mentioned in Scripture as peculiarly violent.

PSALM XLIX.

Hearken, nations far and near,
Dwellers of the world, give ear;
All in high and lordly state,
All of poor and lowly fate:
From my lips shall knowledge stream,
Wisdom is my bosom's theme;
Sayings deep mine ear inspire,
Sayings dark attune my lyre.

Wherefore should I sink with fear,
Though the evil day be here,
And the proud supplanter's heel
Pressing on my step I feel?
They that boast their wealth untold,
They that trust their treasur'd gold,
None can bid his brother live,
None to God a ransom give.

Sad they see their labour o'er,
For the ransom's price was more,
That with endless life could save,
Closing fast the conquer'd grave;
For, beneath their humbled eye,
Lo, the wise and foolish die;
And their treasure's glitt'ring heap
Other hands in turn shall keep.

Fondly hopes their dreaming heart
Splendours never to depart;
Houses, on their rocky base
Resting firm from race to race;
Yet shall many a broad domain
Bear their mighty name in vain:
Man, in pomp, shall ne'er abide,
Dying as the beast has died.

Still behind them pours a crowd,
Echoing still their follies proud;
Till, like flocks, their bones are spread,
And the grave is richly fed:
Then, above their couch forlorn
Dawns the upright's triumph morn;
Then shall God my soul release,
Then shall take me home in peace.

Fear not thou the proud man's bloom;
Naught shall follow to the tomb:
Though through all his prosp'rous days
Gave the world its selfish praise,
With his sires, in darkness deep,
He shall find inglorious sleep.
Man, in pomp, will ne'er be wise,
Dying as the beast that dies.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of the sons of Korah." It is similar to the thirty-seventh in its purport and character.

None can bid his brother live. This is a common sentiment of the ancient poets, and one which, in the darkness of heathenism, could not but oppress the most joyful mind. How much more intense must be its power over the man who is without hope beyond this world, even under the bright beams of the Gospel!

Till, like flocks, their bones are spread. They fall, as undistinguished in death or a little after, as the humblest animals, who are reckoned only in herds. Merrick has well extended the figure, which was not unknown to the ancient classic writers.

> "Together now behold them laid,
> As sheep when night extends her shade,
> While death, within the vaulted rock,
> Stern shepherd, guards the slumb'ring flock."

Naught shall follow to the tomb. So Propertius, Eleg. iii. 3, 35.

"Haud ullas portabis opes Acherontis ad undas."

"Thou bear'st no wealth to Acheron's dark shore."

Man, in pomp, will ne'er be wise. The change of a single letter in the original makes the difference of sentiment between this line and the former;

Man, in pomp, shall ne'er abide.

PSALM L.

God, God the Lord, from far hath spoke,
From peerless Sion shining:
Earth hears his call, where morning broke,
Where evening fades declining:
He comes not silent, but with sound
Of mighty tempest sweeping round,
And flames his pathway lining.

He calls the heav'n, he bids the dust
Its peopling myriads waken;
"Bring all who own'd my cov'nant just,
With vows and off'rings taken:"
God comes on judgment's cloudy car;
The heav'ns shall tell his justice far,
By echoing thunders shaken.

"Hear, O my people, hear the voice
Of Israel's Sov'reign pleading;
Of God, thy God, by right and choice,
But not thy victims needing:
Thy failing shrine I will not blame,
Nor ask a firstling for the flame,
Nor flocks nor bullocks bleeding.

The forest beasts obey my will,
The mountain herds my pleasure;
The bird's wild flight o'er wood and hill
From me receives its measure;

If I could hunger, not from thee
The Lord of earth and air and sea
Would seek their ready treasure.

Can slaughter'd bulls my food impart,
My drink the he-goat gory?
Give to thy God thine upright heart,
And spread thy thankful story;
And call my name in trouble's hour,
And I will send my rescuing pow'r,
And thou shalt give me glory."

But to the wicked thus saith God;
"Why name thy lips profaning
The word thy feet in scorn have trod,
My cov'nant sworn disdaining?
The thief, th' adult'rer, thou hast met,
And sate, and fram'd thy treach'rous net,
Thy brother's step enchaining.

Thou deem'd'st like thine my silent care,
But I thine eye will lighten:
Hear, ye that scorn, lest vengeance tear,
And no deliv'rer frighten:
He offers well who offers praise,
And o'er the man of upright ways
Shall my salvation brighten."

NOTES.—"A Psalm of Asaph." He is named as the author of twelve Psalms, and was the chief amongst the sacred musicians and poets of the days of David. The sublimity of style and thought in this Psalm is worthy of so honoured a name.

But not thy victims needing. The prophets repeatedly urge the inefficacy of all sacrifices and observances, without the piety of the heart. This caution was peculiarly necessary, under a system that required so much of outward attention as the law of Moses.

But to the wicked thus saith God. Origen, it is said, reading these words in the church after having fallen into sin, was so wounded that he sat down and wept, and all the congregation wept with him.

And no deliv'rer frighten. The metaphor is of course taken from the furious onset of a lion, or other wild beast, from whom no power can snatch its prey.

PSALM LI.

Be gracious, Lord, as grace is thine,
As love is all thy heart divine;
Blot out the ill thine eyes have seen,
And wash my guilty spirit clean.

I own my sin: before my sight
It always, always, glares in light:
Thee, thee alone, my crimes defied,
And thou wert just, though I had died!

From sin I drew this seed of death;
In sin my mother gave me breath:
But spotless truth thou seek'st within;
Then, cleanse the inmost fount of sin.

Purge me with hyssop, steep'd on high,
And all my leprous taint shall fly;
And wash me where thy mercies flow,
And I shall mock the mountain snow.

Mine ears with joyous tidings fill,
Till all my aching bones shall thrill:
Turn far away thy wrathful look;
And blot my trespass from thy book.

Create my heart anew and pure,
And give a spirit right and sure;
Nor cast me trembling from thy sight,
Nor wing thy Holy Spirit's flight.

Send thy salvation's joy once more,
And thy free Spirit's help restore:
Then sinners from my lips shall learn,
And on my steps to thee return.

O God, my God and Saviour, save
My soul from guilt's dark, blood-red wave;

And ope my lips, and I shall sing
Sweet praise to thee, my righteous King!

Thou seek'st not victims at the shrine,
Else should thine altar smoke with mine;
A broken heart delights thine eyes,
A contrite heart for sacrifice.

Be gracious, Lord, when Sion calls,
And build on high thy Salem's walls:
Then, off'rings just thy love shall see,
And all our wealth shall rise to thee.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba." There is no reason for rejecting this date, which corresponds entirely with the character of the Psalm.

Amongst our fathers, before and immediately after the Reformation, this Psalm was very often recited in the anticipation of approaching death, especially on the scaffold. Thus, Œcolampadius, in his last moments, repeated it from beginning to end, added, "save me, O Christ my Saviour," and expired. Sir Thomas More, Lady Jane Grey, the Earl of Essex, and others, are related to have said it before their execution.

Thee, thee alone, my crimes defied. David had awfully sinned against Uriah and against many others; but the guilt of his transgression, as committed against God, excludes, for the moment, every other thought.

Purge me with hyssop, steep'd on high. When a leper was cleansed, two birds were taken, with cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop; one of the birds was killed over a vessel of water; the living bird, with the cedar, scarlet and hyssop, was then dipped in the blood; the leper was sprinkled, and the bird let loose. The hyssop was a small, bitter herb, apparently chosen because it possessed some cleansing virtues.

And thy free Spirit's help restore. The Septuagint has πνεύματι ἡγεμονικῷ; the Vulgate, "spiritu principali." Luther has well translated it, "der freudige Geist." Not less happy is the thought in "the Christian Year;"

"With that free Spirit blest,
Who to the contrite can dispense
The princely joy of innocence."

O God, my God and Saviour, save. These concluding verses, as is intimated by Bishop Law, will be the prayer of the Jews, when the veil shall be taken from their hearts.

And build on high thy Salem's walls. It is difficult to understand how commentators, with the least perception of poetic beauty, can urge such an expression as this in its literal sense, as a proof that this verse must have been added, or the whole Psalm composed, after Jerusalem was in ruins.

PSALM LII.

Why boasts thy heart in deeds of ill,
Thou man of lawless might?
The God of grace is sov'reign still,
And he shall guard the right.

Thy tongue is like a treach'rous knife;
Thy soul to crime hath clung:
Thou lov'st the murd'rous words of strife,
O thou deceitful tongue!

God, in his hour, thy strength shall crush,
And root thee up from earth;
And from the land of life shall hush
Thy dwelling's sound of mirth.

The just shall see and fear and cry,
"Yon man of might behold,
Who sought not strength from God most High,
But lean'd on crime and gold!"

But I am like an olive green,
Which God's fair courts enclose;
And in his love my hope serene
Forever shall repose.

His deeds forever shall I speak,
And on his name rely:
No worthier lot his saints can seek,
Than thus to live and die.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, an Ode of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said to him, 'David came to the

house of Abimelech.'" The title is not contradicted by the contents of the Psalm.

Thou man of lawless might. Mr. Mudge supposes the address, "mighty man," to be here ironical.

God, in his hour, thy strength shall crush. The arrogant sinner is here apostrophized, and the personification at the end of the preceding verse is dropped.

But I am like an olive green. If the occasion assigned in the superscription were the true date of this Psalm, and if the speedy misery of the wicked and the final prosperity of the just be asserted by the sacred poet, how, it might well be asked, could this be consistent with the fate of Abimelech and his brethren, except David could point to a rest that remaineth for the people of God on high?

PSALM LIII.

The fool saith in his heart,
"There is no God to view:"
They wind their ways, with loathsome art,
And no man's deeds are true.

God from the throne above
Look'd o'er th' unnumber'd race,
If any walk'd in wisdom's love,
If any sought his grace.

All, all are turn'd away,
To common ruin run;
Where'er may fall his eye's keen ray,
None doeth good, not one.

And know they naught, nor heed,
Whose hands with crime are red,
Whose pray'rless wants my flock must feed,
As feeds their common bread?

Fearfully fear'd the frail,
And yet no fear there came;
God breaks the arms that thee assail,
And thou may'st scorn their shame.

Oh, were salvation come
From Sion's holy King!
What joy shall light the exile's home,
When God his own shall bring!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician upon the flutes, an Ode of David." This is the fourteenth Psalm, with some very slight variations. One of the chief of these is the use of the name God throughout for Jehovah.

Fearfully fear'd the frail. This verse contains the principal change from the words of the fourteenth Psalm. Whensoever or by whomsoever it was introduced, I cannot help thinking that the circumstances which caused the variation gave to the Psalm a slightly different application, and caused its insertion here.

PSALM LIV.

Save me, O God, by thy great name,
And judge me by thy pow'r,
And hear the pray'r my lips shall frame
In mine afflicted hour.

For foes unknown beset my path,
And murd'rous tyrants rise;
And not thy mercy nor thy wrath
Can fix their impious eyes.

Lo, on my side the faithful Lord
Mid my defenders stands:
His arm shall waste, with fell reward,
The slayers' ambush'd bands.

A cheerful gift, a worthy song,
My God, I bring to thee;
Since all their wish on that false throng
My rescued eyes may see.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician on the stringed instruments, an Ode of David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, 'Doth not David hide himself with us?'" It is very probable that such was really the origin of this brief supplication.

Save me, O God, by thy great name. The name of God is, by a common Hebraism, placed for himself and his divine power.

PSALM LV.

Oh, hear, my God, while loud I pray,
Nor hide thee from my cry;
Oh, hearken, while forlorn I stray,
And heave the ceaseless sigh;

While high the shouts of malice ring,
And vile oppressors rage;
While sorrow on my head they fling,
And fiery warfare wage.

Around my faint and groaning heart
Death spreads its awful shade;
And trembling, at each sound I start,
With horrid dreams afraid.

Oh, I have cried, had I the wing,
Like yon swift dove to roam!
Then should my spirit upward spring,
And seek a peaceful home.

Afar, in some untrodden waste,
Would I my shelter find;
And joyful to its covert haste,
And leave the storm behind.

Destroy, O Lord, their counsels dark;
Their crafty tongues divide:
For, round these walls, mine eye must mark
The step of strife and pride.

By day they rage, by night they prowl;
And crime and sorrow meet:
Guilt holds with guile its dwelling foul,
Nor leaves the blood-stain'd street.

It was no scoff of ancient hate;
Such taunt I scarce would dread:
No open foe grew bold and great;
Then, I had seen and fled:

But thou, as mine own bosom dear,
My guide, with whom I trod,
While words of sweetness charm'd the ear,
Up to the house of God.

Let ambush'd death their haughty prime
Sweep downward to the tomb:
For in their dwellings dwells the crime
That mocks the ling'ring doom.

But I will call on God most High,
The Lord, my Saviour near:
At eve, at morn, at noon, I cry,
And he my voice shall hear.

He guards my peace through stormy strife,
And hosts my cause maintain:
The Lord, enthron'd in endless life,
Breaks down the hostile train.

They will not turn; his wrath they dare;
They stretch their trait'rous hands
Against the men whose peace they swear;
Against their cov'nant's bands.

More soft than milk, the accents steal;
War fills the heart unseen:
More smooth than oil, they seem to heal;
Each word a faulchion keen.

Cast on the Lord his wisdom's gift,
Thy doom, whate'er betide:
His arm shall all thy burdens lift;
The righteous shall not slide.

O God, before thine anger's blaze
To death's dark gulf they flee ;
For blood and fraud make transient days ;
But I will trust in thee.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician on the stringed instruments, an Ode of David." Like many others, it is referred by most of the commentators to the time when Absalom rose in insurrection against his father; but this is only conjecture.

Like yon swift dove to roam. The dove is remarkable for the swiftness of its flight. Pliny says that it is much swifter than the hawk, where it can range freely.

For, round these walls, mine eye must mark. Hatred and discord seem to be compared to sentinels, pacing the walls, and carefully excluding all peace; or else to tumultuous bands, ranging through an unguarded city.

But thou, as mine own bosom dear. The treason of Ahithophel may be deemed a type of the treason of Judas, as David was the type of Christ in so many circumstances of his life.

And hosts my cause maintain. Armies of angels, or rather all the powers of heaven, are on the side of the servant of God.

PSALM LVI.

Have mercy, Lord! the panting breath
Of tyrant foes is loud :
Each day they pant to work my death,
Each day to battle crowd.

O thou most High, in fearful days
I trust thy word and arm :
My God I trust, my God I praise,
Nor dread a mortal's harm.

The livelong day my words they wrest,
And all their thought is ill :
They watch the paths my feet have press'd,
And wait to rise and kill.

Shall guilt so proud a refuge see ?
The Lord their pride shall bow :

Thou tell'st my steps, where'er I flee;
My tears, oh, treasure thou!

Are not my woes within thy book?
Oh, when to thee I cry,
Before the God that ne'er forsook,
I know my foes shall fly.

My cheerful voice to God I raise,
And trust his word and arm:
The Lord my God I trust and praise,
Nor dread a mortal's harm.

Thy vows are on me, God of grace:
I keep the pledge I gave,
When look'd my soul on death's dread face,
And thou wert there to save.

Wilt thou not guide and guard me still,
That, in thy holy sight,
I journey onward by thy will,
And walk in life and light?

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, to the tune of 'the Silent Dove among Strangers,' a Writing of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath." No more probable origin can be assigned to this Psalm.

The panting breath. They are painted as pressing behind him, like wild beasts, panting on the footsteps of their prey.

My tears, oh, treasure thou! The literal translation is, "put my tears into thy bottle." As the most precious wines or medicines were thus valued and preserved, so the Psalmist prays that the Lord would thus regard his tears, and not suffer them to fall unnoticed to the ground. We are accustomed to use comparisons still larger, when we speak of "floods" of tears. Tear-bottles are said to have been found in old sepulchral urns.

PSALM LVII.

Have mercy, mercy, God most just!
My soul would flee, with trembling trust,
Beneath thy shad'wing wings to lie,
Till death's wild storms have hurried by.

To God, the sov'reign God of all,
My champion in the heav'ns, I call;
His love and truth shall hold me safe,
When fierce destroyers roar and chafe.

My soul is in a lion's den;
My dwelling is mid fiery men;
Their teeth as spears and arrows tear,
Their tongue is like a faulchion bare.

Be thou, O God, exalted high,
In thy bright realms beyond the sky;
And far as stretch the earth and sea,
Let thine own glory rise to thee.

Along my path their net was spread;
They bow'd them down to watch my tread;
A treach'rous pit their hands prepar'd,
And there they fell, themselves ensnar'd.

My heart is tun'd, O God my King,
My heart is tun'd, to praise and sing:
Awake, my glory; lute and lyre;
I wake, with morning's eastern fire.

Amidst the realms I praise my Lord,
Amidst the nations' glad accord:
Thy mercy high as heav'n ascends,
Thy truth beyond the clouds extends.

Be thou, O God, exalted high
In thy bright realms beyond the sky;
And far as stretch the earth and sea,
Let thine own glory rise to thee.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, Destroy not, a Writing of David, when he fled from Saul, in the cave." The Psalm was undoubtedly written after the deliverance, not during the peril. It is uncertain whether the words, "Destroy not," express its character, or the melody to which it was to be sung.

Awake, my glory. Thus the soul is addressed, as the chief excellence and glory of man.

I wake with morning's eastern fire. Mr. Street translates this, "I will awake the morning," and quotes Milton's Allegro,

> "Oft list'ning how the hound and horn
> Cheerily rouse the slumb'ring morn."

PSALM LVIII.

Speak ye indeed, ye sons of man,
The justice silent all too long?
No: all your hearts but evil plan,
And weigh your hands but crime and wrong.

E'en from the birth the wicked stray,
And lies are on their earliest breath:
A poison tracks their slimy way,
So bears the serpent pois'nous death.

So the deaf adder shuts her ear,
And on, her path of murder winds;
The charmer's voice she will not hear,
How wise so e'er the charm he binds.

Break thou, O God, the lion's jaw;
Break the young lions' rav'nous teeth:
And while their bows the guilty draw,
Cast down the blunted shafts beneath.

Waste thou their strength as waters glide,
As melts the snail along the earth;
As, ere the light of life it ey'd,
Has fall'n the mother's timeless birth.

Before the thorns have felt the fire,
Before the impious feast is warm,
The Lord shall pour his righteous ire,
And strew them on its whirlwind storm.

The just shall joy where vengeance sweeps,
And wash in impious gore his feet;
And men shall cry, "yes, well he reaps;
Yes, God has still a judgment seat."

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, Destroy not, a Writing of David." Townsend places this Psalm, in the order of time, immediately after the fifty-seventh.

And weigh your hands but crime and wrong. They are represented as balancing and distributing injuries, instead of right and justice.

The charmer's voice she will not hear. In the East, at this day, there are many who pretend to exercise their incantations upon serpents, and really attain a surprising skill in controlling them, after having extracted their poison.

As melts the snail along the earth. The comparison is drawn from the appearance of the creature in its slimy progress, which is probably attended by a loss of strength.

Has fall'n the mother's timeless birth. "*Abortivus, a cadendo,*" is the derivation of the Hebrew word.

Before the thorns have felt the fire. The image comes from an accident, which would sometimes befall travellers in the desert. Having prepared a fire of such fuel as they could collect, they would see all swept away by some sudden whirlwind.

And wash in impious gore his feet. This is not a figure of barbarous exultation, I believe; but of the triumphant passage of the victor over the field of battle, where he could not but tread in the blood of the slain.

PSALM LIX.

Save me, O God, from many foes,
That, leagu'd to slay me, stand:
Oh, lift me o'er their work of woes,
And stay the bloody hand.

For lo, O Lord, around my path
The mighty ambush wait:
And, though they rush in fiery wrath,
They rush with causeless hate.

Lord God of Hosts, arise, awake,
Thou God of Israel's seed;
Thy vengeance o'er the impious shake,
Nor spare the spoiler's deed.

At fall of eve, like famish'd hounds,
Around the walls they bark:

And, like a sword, their words are wounds,
For "who is nigh to hark?"

Thou, Lord, shalt laugh to bitter scorn
The heathen's boasting pow'r;
Thou, in whose strength my heart forlorn
Has found a shelt'ring tow'r.

My God's dear mercy guards me still,
And all my way o'erspreads;
My God my heart's desire shall fill
On mine oppressors' heads.

Yet slay them not, but strew them wide,
A lesson long to yield:
Bow down the murd'rers' tow'ring pride,
O Lord, our sov'reign Shield!

For, with each word their lips prepare,
Their tongue's transgressions soar:
Let those proud words be made their snare,
That impious falsehood pour.

Oh, waste them, waste in wrath away,
And let their ruin teach,
How God in Jacob holds the sway
That earth's wide bounds shall reach.

At fall of eve, like famish'd hounds,
Then let them turn and bark;
While men their hunger's moaning sounds
The livelong night shall mark.

But I, with morning's rising light,
Thy pow'r and grace will sing:
For thou hast been our shelt'ring might,
My Saviour and my King!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, Destroy not, a Writing of David, when Saul sent, and they watched the house to slay him." The words of the Psalm coincide very well with that history. Mr.

Mudge, however, refers it, not without plausibility, to the siege of Jerusalem by the Assyrians under Rabshakeh.

Around the walls they bark. This has sometimes been translated as an imprecation, like that near the end of the Psalm; but it seems to present a more striking picture, if the present tense be adopted here, and the future or imperative there.

PSALM LX.

O God, our armies thou hast left;
Their scatt'ring ranks thy sword has cleft;
Thy wrathful terrors fiercely burn;
Oh, turn us, Lord, and thou return!

Earth reels beneath thy vengeful stroke;
Oh, heal the breaches thou hast broke:
In troublous scenes thy people pine,
And drink confusion's deadly wine.

Yet thou a banner fair hast rear'd,
To tell thy name where thou wert fear'd;
Far o'er thy hosts belov'd to wave;
Then hear, and stretch thine arm, and save.

And hark, the Lord lifts high his voice,
And in his word my ears rejoice:
I haste old Shechem's walls to scale,
And stretch my line o'er Succoth's vale.

And mine are Gilead's fruitful hills;
And mine the fields Manasseh tills;
My helmet's strength are Ephraim's bands;
My sceptre rests in Judah's hands.

In Moab's streams my feet I lave,
And cast my shoe to Edom's slave:
Philistia, raise thy joyous cry,
To see thy conqu'ring lord so nigh.

But who shall lead our trembling pow'rs,
And bring to Edom's battled tow'rs?
And hast thou cast us, Lord, away,
And lead'st no more our weak array?

Oh, give us aid from trouble's chain;
For man's poor aid is false and vain:
We march, with God's victorious might,
And he shall tread our foes in flight.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician on the six-stringed lyre, a Writing of David, to teach; when he strove with the Mesopotamians, and with the Syrians of Zobah, and when Joab returned, and smote twelve thousand of the Edomites in the Valley of Salt." It was in the course of those contests, probably, that this Psalm had indeed its origin.

And drink confusion's deadly wine. So Isaiah (li. 17.)

"Which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury;
Thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling,
And wrung them out."

Yet thou a banner fair hast rear'd. Soldiers are accustomed to look towards their standard with ardour, and to follow boldly where it leads the way.

And stretch my line o'er Succoth's vale. To stretch the line was to divide the ground, in the right of an owner. Shechem was a strong town of the tribe of Ephraim. Succoth was in the tribe of Gad, beyond Jordan, not far from the sea of Gennesareth. Gilead and Manasseh were also beyond Jordan. Ephraim was one of the mightiest and most populous of the tribes, and Judah was chief of all. A complete dominion, therefore, over the whole Jewish nation, is described in these verses.

In Moab's streams my feet I lave. The image is that of the most servile subjection.

And cast my shoe to Edom's slave. Edom seems to be represented as the slave who performed the meanest office, that of receiving the shoe which the master cast from his foot. Other interpretations have been given; but this corresponds best with the character of the figure in the preceding line.

PSALM LXI.

Hear, Lord, a sinking bosom's cry
From earth's most lonely land;
And lead me to the rock on high
Where I may fearless stand.

Oh, hear, for thou hast been my tow'r;
To thee my spirit springs;
To dwell within thy sacred bow'r,
To hide beneath thy wings.

My vows, O God, have found thine ear,
And thou hast ne'er forgot:
Mid them that keep thy holy fear,
Thou giv'st me all my lot.

With days on days thy love supreme
The king's long bliss shall swell:
While age by age rolls on its stream,
He still with God shall dwell.

Oh, send from heav'n thy truth and love,
To guard his perill'd way:
So I will lift thy praise above,
And daily off'rings pay.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician on the stringed instruments, a Psalm of David."

From earth's most lonely land. It may be doubted whether expressions like these are to be taken as if they would afford any evidence of the place at which a Psalm was composed. This is a natural figure for distress and barrenness of heart.

The king's long bliss shall swell. David is here the type of the Messiah; and the words, in their fullest extent, are most true of the antitype.

PSALM LXII.

Still I will look for God's defence,
My strength and rocky wall:
All my salvation comes from thence:
I shall not greatly fall.

How long shall rush your storming pow'rs
Against one bosom just?

Soon, like a shatter'd bulwark's tow'rs,
Your might shall strew the dust.

They lie, to shake his seat above,
The seat they cannot climb:
Their lips o'erflow with words of love,
Their hearts with thoughts of crime.

But look, my soul, for God's defence,
My strength and rocky wall;
For all my hope shall come from thence,
And I shall never fall.

In God, my God, who ne'er departs,
My hope, my fame, abide:
Oh, trust him all with outpour'd hearts,
If good or ill betide.

God is our strength; but, strong or frail,
The sons of men are vain;
And, weigh'd when judgment holds the scale,
As light as air remain.

Trust not the robber's sordid piles,
Nor boast the hoarded ore:
When round thy home rich plenty smiles,
Yet love not wealth the more.

For once and twice our God hath spoke,
That his is sov'reign sway:
And mercy, Lord, shall guide thy stroke,
But thou shalt all repay.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, for Jeduthun, a Psalm of David." If any date be chosen, it will doubtless be the time of his persecutions under Saul.

They lie, to shake his seat above. The just man, of whom the Psalmist had immediately before spoken, is thus assailed by those who envy his prosperity and reputation.

For once and twice our God hath spoke. This form of speech expresses a fixed and irrevocable determination or decree. So Job, (xxxiii. 14.)

"For God speaketh once, yea twice,
Yet man perceiveth it not."

PSALM LXIII.

O God, my God, with morning's beam
To thee my thirsty spirit flies:
From wastes where glides no cooling stream,
For thee my panting bosom cries.

As I have seen, oh, might I see
Thy glory in thy holy place;
And sing, more dear than life to me,
The beams of thy celestial grace.

My joyous lips shall speak thy praise,
Till life's last breath in praise have ceas'd;
My hands in thy great name I raise,
And on thy love my spirit feast.

On my still couch at midnight laid,
I muse on thee, each wakeful hour;
And bless thy wing's protecting shade,
Since I have known my Guardian's pow'r.

Fast to thy step my soul shall cleave,
And thy right hand shall hold me fast,
When they who snares and ruin weave
To death's dark caves have downward pass'd.

The sword and fox shall drink their gore;
The liars' lips shall close in shame;
But high in God my song shall soar
Amid the hosts that lov'd thy name.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah." It was evidently written at a time when the monarch was far removed from the sanctuary. By the ancient Christians it was called "the morning Psalm," and sung every morning in the public service.

The sword and fox shall drink their gore. The animal here named appears to be the jackall, which digs up and devours the bodies of the dead.

PSALM LXIV.

Hear, O my God, my voice of pray'r;
Preserve my soul from fears and foes;
And hide me from the hidden snare,
And strew the throngs that round me close.

Their tongues are set like sharpen'd swords;
Against the just their bows are bent;
The pois'ning shafts are deadly words,
Secret, and swift, and boldly sent.

They arm and urge for deeds of ill;
And "who," they cry, "our snares shall mark?"
They search, and search, their crimes to fill,
And all their heart is deep and dark.

But, like an arrow swift of wing,
Shall God's just judgments pierce them through;
Their tongue shall yield their own false sting,
And all shall flee that stand to view.

For all shall see his wondrous ways,
And far the Lord's dread deed shall tell:
In God, the just shall trust and praise,
And high the upright heart shall swell.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David." It is similar in its character to the fifty-second.

They search, and search, their crimes to fill. In this completeness of inquiry after means of wrong, the most dreadful turpitude is delineated.

And all shall flee that stand to view. So, when Korah and his company were destroyed, "all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also." (Num. xvi. 34.)

PSALM LXV.

A peaceful praise is thine,
In Sion's holy place,
And grateful gifts surround thy shrine,
Eternal God of grace.

All souls to thee shall throng,
Who hear'st the suppliant's call;
And though our thousand sins be strong,
Yet thou canst cleanse from all.

Oh, happy, chosen guests,
To thy bright mansion led!
There, in thy love their spirit rests,
And shares thy heav'nly bread.

Dread wonders tell thy hand,
O thou most strong to save!
Thou hope of earth's remotest strand,
And isles that strew the wave.

Thou, girt with pow'r around,
Hast fix'd the mountains fast;
Thou still'st the seas' wild, raving sound,
The billows and the blast.

Thou still'st the billows' roar,
The warring realms' alarm:
The dwellers on each distant shore
Behold and fear thine arm.

Of thee the morning's beams,
The evening shadows sing:
And earth is rich with show'ring streams
From God's exhaustless spring.

Then, when the furrows yield
Beneath thy trickling rain,

When gentle tides have smooth'd the field,
Thou giv'st the golden grain.

Thy blessing opes the year,
Thy goodness crowns its close;
And where thy rolling wheels appear,
The dew of plenty flows.

It flows on barren rocks,
And waving vales rejoice;
And mountains, white with snowy flocks,
Lift high their happy voice.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm and Song of David."

The warring realms' alarm. The stormy ocean seems here to suggest the thought of that tumult of nations, of which it is so apt an image.

And where thy rolling wheels appear. Possibly the clouds may be here represented as the chariot of God.

PSALM LXVI.

Let all the earth a joyful cry
To God, its Maker, raise:
And sing ye forth his name on high,
And glorious be his praise.

And say, "how dreadful, Lord, art thou!
Thy foes thy might shall own;
And all the earth shall lowly bow,
And sing thy name alone."

Come, see the wondrous works of God!
He dried the wat'ry way,
And through the flood his people trod,
And triumph swell'd their lay.

He rules forever in his might;
His eyes the nations see:

O child of dust, beneath his sight
Bow down thy rebel knee!

Oh, praise our God with praises high,
Each tribe of ev'ry land:
He hath not giv'n our souls to die;
And firm our footsteps stand.

For thou, O God, our souls hast tried,
Like silver in the flame:
The net our struggling members tied,
The burden bent our frame;

Hard on our necks th' oppressor rode;
Through fire and wave we pass'd:
But thou to plenty's fair abode
Hast led our feet at last.

And therefore, in thy temple bow'd,
My cheerful thanks I pay;
And keep whate'er my lips have vow'd
In trouble's dismal day.

I promised gifts, and gifts I bear,
From forest, field and stall;
The incense rising with my pray'r,
My flocks, my herds, my all.

Come, ye that fear the Lord most High,
And I his grace will tell;
My lips to him have made my cry,
My lips his praise shall swell.

If glad in guilt my heart could rest,
Unheard that heart might pray;
But now he hears: my God be bless'd,
Who would not turn away!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Song or Psalm." It is generally ascribed to the times immediately after the captivity.

He dried the wat'ry way. The Hebrews always went back to the wonders of their deliverance from Egypt, as the most signal example of divine interposition on behalf of their nation.

Hard on our necks th' oppressor rode. This image is apparently taken from the horse under his rider. Others suppose it to represent the furious conqueror, trampling his foes beneath the hoofs of his steed; a figure repeatedly employed by the ancients.

PSALM LXVII.

God grant us blessing, grant us grace,
And lift the brightness of his face;
Till all the world thy ways shall know,
The realms to thy salvation flow.

Thy praise, O God, let nations raise,
Let all the nations hymn thy praise;
And one high song of gladness soar
From ev'ry tribe of ev'ry shore.

For thou shalt judge the world in right,
And lead the people by thy might:
Thy praise, O God, let nations raise,
Let all the nations hymn thy praise.

So earth shall yield her large increase,
And God, our God, shall send us peace:
Our homes shall taste his blessing here,
And earth's far bounds shall learn his fear.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician on the stringed instruments, a Psalm or Song." It is placed by Townsend during the captivity; but there is nothing to determine its date.

Till all the world thy ways shall know. The call of the Gentiles is clearly anticipated here; so clearly, that this verse has been selected as the fittest form of supplication for the extension of the church of Christ.

PSALM LXVIII.

Let God arise, and strew afar
His foes before his conqu'ring car,
Like smoke that drives when tempests blow,
Like wax beneath the sunbeam's glow.

So let th' ungodly's might expire,
When God shall lift his glance of fire;
While o'er his people's joyous way
That glance shall pour resplendent day.

Sing praise to God, sing praises high
To him who rides the stormy sky;
Make straight his path with glad acclaim:
The Lord Jehovah is his name.

The Father of the orphan child,
The widow's Judge and Saviour mild,
He dwells in yon celestial place,
And rules the world with glorious grace.

God brings the wand'rer home in peace,
And gives the fetter'd feet release;
But far, in regions parch'd and dry,
Th' unhumbled rebels pine and die.

Lord, when along the desert sands
From bondage came thy rescued bands,
And thy bright path their footsteps led,
Earth shook beneath the awful tread.

The heav'ns their Maker's presence knew,
And fell in drops of trembling dew;
And Sinai heav'd its pillars fast,
When God, the God of Israel, pass'd.

From thee came down a gracious show'r,
To stay thy pilgrims' fainting pow'r,

Till trod the poor the home of rest,
That thy rich love with plenty bless'd.

The Lord the word of triumph spoke;
The strain of many a songstress woke:
And kings and armies fled away,
And peaceful households shar'd the prey.

"In servile bonds too long ye toil'd;
The dove's fair plumes were clipp'd and soil'd:
But now ye spread each silv'ry fold,
And soar on pinions bright with gold."

When monarchs, with their flying hosts,
Were strew'd through all the conquer'd coasts,
Their whit'ning bones the vallies press'd,
As white as snow on Salmon's crest.

The crags of Bashan touch the cloud;
Why scowl those envious summits proud?
A nobler mount than Bashan's swells,
Where God the Lord forever dwells.

Mid twice ten thousand chariots bright,
Mid thousand thousand hosts of light,
The Lord maintains his holy place,
As once on Sinai's trembling base.

Thou hast ascended, Lord, on high,
And captive led captivity:
Thy triumph's gifts and thine abode
On rebel man thy love bestow'd.

Bless'd be the Lord, who, day by day,
With blessings loads our happy way;
The Lord our Saviour, strong to save,
Who opes and shuts th' impris'ning grave.

The Lord the head of pride shall bow,
And spurn th' oppressor's stubborn brow,

And crush beneath his wheels of wrath
The hosts that crowd the guilty path.

For God hath said, "I lead once more
From Bashan, from the deep sea-shore;
The blood of foes shall wash thy tread,
And stain thy dogs' fierce nostrils red."

My God, my King, before our eyes
How fair thy courts, thy train arise;
The chanting crowd, the minstrels sweet,
The virgin timbrels' measur'd beat!

"Oh, bless our God," so soars the song,
"Oh, bless the Lord where myriads throng:
Let all that flows from Israel's spring
In one loud swell his praises bring!"

There Jacob's youngest marshall'd stands,
And Judah's chiefs, with kingly bands;
The chiefs of northern Napht'li's host,
The chiefs of Zeb'lun's wealthy coast.

God gives thy strength: oh, strengthen still,
And all thy work, our God, fulfil:
Till kings with costly gifts shall wait
Before thy Sion's temple gate.

Rebuke the beast that shakes his reeds,
The lordly herds on countless meads;
And let the wealth of nations shine
In peaceful tribute at thy shrine.

Oh, break the hosts whose joy is strife;
From God let kingdoms ask their life;
Let princes throng from Egypt's strand,
And Afric spread her suppliant hand.

Sing, all ye realms, high praises sing,
A royal song to God our King:

The heav'n of heav'ns bears up his wheels;
His voice, a voice of glory, peals.

O God, in sov'reign might alone,
How dreadful tow'rs thy cloudy throne!
Yet thou thy people's strength shalt yield:
Oh, bless'd be God, his Israel's shield!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm or Song of David." It was undoubtedly sung when the ark was borne from the house of Obed-Edom to Mount Sion; and it appears as if it may have been adapted to be dropped and resumed at intervals, as the procession advanced. The apostle Paul has applied one passage to the ascension of our Saviour; of which that solemn entrance of the ark into its abode was a majestic figure.

Let God arise, and strew afar. This is the same form which was uttered by Moses, as often as the ark was taken up to be removed with the Israelites on their journeys in the desert.

The Lord Jehovah is his name. The name Jah is but an abbreviation of Jehovah, the title of everlasting, self-existent Deity.

Lord, when along the desert sands. Hardly any thing more noble can be imagined, than the introduction of these sublime remembrances, while the ark proceeded with its splendid train.

The strain of many a songstress woke. "The publishers of the tidings" are, in the original, named by a feminine word: and it seems to allude to the songs of Miriam and the other women of Israel.

In servile bonds too long ye toil'd. This verse is supposed to be the song of the women.

As white as snow on Salmon's crest. Mount Salmon was that hill near Shechem, from which Abimelech and his host cut down, every man his bough, to burn the tower of Shechem. The translation which is here given follows the most probable interpretation of a difficult passage. So Ovid,

"Humanis ossibus albet humus."
Fast. i.

The soil is white with bones of men.

The crags of Bashan touch the cloud. The poet proceeds to magnify the hill of the Lord over mountains far loftier, but less favoured. Thus, the tall summits in Bashan look with envy towards Sion.

Mid twice ten thousand chariots bright. Here the thought rises, if I mistake not, above all the earthly pomp of the tabernacle, to that celestial splendour which could best be compared with the sight at Mount Sinai.

Thou hast ascended, Lord, on high. The train may here be supposed to be ascending the hill. God is entering into his holy place with all that invisible glory which had just been sung. But St. Paul (Eph. iv. 8.) teaches us to view in this the type of the ascending Redeemer.

From Bashan, from the deep sea-shore. The meaning of this verse would seem to be, that the future protection and victories which the Lord would grant his people should not be inferior to those which had distinguished their ancient days of conquest.

My God, my King, before our eyes. Here the procession perhaps paused at the entrance of the sacred courts.

The virgin timbrels' measur'd beat. The timbrel was an instrument of hollow wood, covered with leather; and was beaten with the hand, for the most part by females. It was devoted to sacred and festival occasions.

There Jacob's youngest marshall'd stands. Judah and Benjamin were the two nearest of the tribes to Jerusalem; and Zebulun and Naphtali two of the most remote; so that these may well represent the whole nation, near and far.

Rebuke the beast that shakes his reeds. This is, probably, either the crocodile, the natural figure for Egypt; or the lion, which often lies among the reeds on the banks of rivers, and would be the image of any mighty and ferocious enemy.

The lordly herds on countless meads. All the Gentile nations are denoted by these hosts of stronger and weaker animals.

PSALM LXIX.

Save me, O God! the waters roll,
And press to drown my struggling soul:
I sink amidst th' unfathom'd deep,
And o'er my head wild billows sweep.

With weary cries my spirit faints;
My voice is hoarse with long complaints;
My tearful eye has lost its ray,
So long I wait my God's delay.

For more than all my clust'ring hair,
The foes whose causeless hate I bear;
The slayer's arm is false and strong,
And wrests my right, for unknown wrong.

Thou, Lord of hosts, my soul canst see;
It hides no guilty thought from thee:
Yet look on those who trust thy name,
Nor bring their hope with mine to shame.

O God, the God of Israel's race,
For thee I hide my burning face;
An outcast from my brethren's hearth,
And scorn'd by mine own mother's birth.

Thy temple's zeal my breast inspires;
It wastes me with its sacred fires:
For, tow'rds my head the taunts I call,
That on thy name were aim'd to fall.

The sackcloth robe I meekly bore;
The gate's vile gazers mock'd the more:
My soul in tears and fasting pin'd,
And heard the drunkard's song behind.

But, in an hour when thou art near,
My pray'rs, O Lord, shall seek thine ear:
Oh, let thine ancient love abound,
And thy salvation shield me round.

Redeem, redeem me, from my foes;
Let not the waters o'er me close:
Roll back destruction's whelming wave,
Nor shut me in the darksome cave.

Oh, hear in thine abounding grace,
Nor hide, good Lord, thy glorious face:
Fast sinks my soul mid hate and grief;
Oh, hear and haste with thy relief.

My shame is all before thy view;
Thou look'st my foes' strong legions through:
Reproach and shame have crush'd my heart,
And rushing tears in anguish start.

I gaze, to catch some pitying eye,
And see no friend, no mourner nigh:
I ask'd for bread, and gall they gave,
And sour'd the bowl my thirst must crave.

Oh, let their board their bane prepare,
And ev'ry blessing hide a snare;
Oh, blind their eyes, and bow them low
With thy fierce wrath's consuming blow.

And be their home a blasted spot,
And be their tents a scene forgot;
Because they triumph in thy stroke,
And mock the heart thy rod has broke.

Oh, for their evil, evil send;
Nor with the righteous be their end,
Nor with the living be their place,
But blot them from thy book of grace.

For me, though poor and faint I lie,
My God shall lift my head on high;
And I my thankful hymn will bring,
And loud the Lord's salvation sing.

Such gift the Lord far less can scorn,
Than slaughter'd herds with hoof and horn:
The humble eye shall gaze and glow;
The faithful heart in joy shall flow.

O God, who hear'st when want complains,
Nor spurn'st thy people's captive chains,
Let heav'n, and earth, and ev'ry sea,
And all their dwellers, sing to thee!

For God shall Sion's walls restore,
And Judah's tow'rs shall rise once more;
And there his servants' seed shall rest,
Where truth abides, and love is bless'd.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician on the six-stringed harp, a Psalm of David." It can be understood only when it is viewed as prophetic of the Messiah.

It wastes me with its sacred fires. The apostles applied this passage to the zeal of our Saviour, when he drove the money-changers from the temple.

The gate's vile gazers mock'd the more. As the gates of cities were very public places, where the courts were held, and where the multitude assembled for every purpose, the idle and dissolute would naturally be there, deriding the righteous passer.

And sour'd the bowl my thirst must crave. "Vinegar," says Harmar, "was in the East the refreshment of a slave, of a wretched prisoner." This was the Scripture which was fulfilled when our Lord said upon the cross, "I thirst." Prophecy is seen in these minute circumstances of correspondence.

Oh, let their board their bane prepare. The apostle Paul (Rom. xi.) regards this as accomplished in the blindness of the Jews, after their rejection of the Saviour. Such denunciations are to be viewed chiefly in the light of curses from God upon the stubborn enemies of his Son.

Than slaughter'd herds with hoof and horn. "That is," says Dr. Durell, "of full age for sacrifice, which was three at least." So Virgil, Ecl. iii. v. 87.

> "Jam cornu petat, et pedibus qui spargat arenam."
> When aiming now th' assailant horn he stands,
> And toss his feet on high the scatter'd sands.

PSALM LXX.

O God, to whom my hope shall cling,
  Redeem my captive life:
Oh, come with speed thy mercy's wing;
Haste, my Deliv'rer and my King,
  And end this anxious strife.

Let shame and trouble whelm them all,
  Who hem my guiltless track:
Let them who ask my fatal fall,
And loud "aha!" in insult call,
  Be chas'd in ruin back.

Joy be with them who joy in thee,
  Till "God be prais'd," they say:
And I, though poor and lone I flee,
Will hope the Lord's kind arm to see:
  My God, make no delay!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David, for remembrance." It is a copy of the last five verses of the fortieth Psalm.

O God, to whom my hope shall cling. Some special use of the words of this Psalm, in the temple service, must probably have led to its separate insertion here.

PSALM LXXI.

In thee, O Lord, I trust:
Save me from shame and fear;
Save me, as thou art good and just,
And bow thy gracious ear.

Oh, send thy rescuing pow'r,
That I may always flee,
And find my rock and shelt'ring tow'r,
And fortress, Lord, in thee.

Redeem me, God my King,
From fierce and treach'rous hands:
My only hope, from youth's fair spring,
In thee unchanging stands.

From life's first dawning ray,
From nature's ent'ring gate,
Thy hand has op'd and led my way,
That hand my praises wait.

Thy shelter safe I seek,
While wond'ring throngs adore;
Oh, let my lips thy glory seek,
My song forever soar.

And cast me not away,
When age has bar'd my brow;
Forsake me not, when, old and gray,
My falt'ring limbs I bow.

My foes' wild fury breaks
In one tumultuous cry;

"Pursue and slay! his God forsakes;
No Saviour's arm is nigh."

Oh, go not far, my Lord!
Thy strong, swift aid disclose:
Let shame and scorn and woe reward
My soul's remorseless foes.

But I will hope and praise,
And high my song shall swell;
And still my lips, through endless days,
Shall thy salvation tell.

I cannot count thy gifts,
But, clad in strength divine,
The praise my pilgrim spirit lifts
Is thine, is only thine.

My youth the Lord has led,
And I his praise have told:
Forsake not, Lord, my hoary head,
My falt'ring limbs and cold;

Till I have shew'd thy pow'r
To ages yet to be:
How high, O Lord, thy judgments tow'r!
Oh, who shall vie with thee!

Thou gav'st me want and woe,
And thou shalt blessing give;
Till, bursting from the depths below,
My soul in thee shall live.

So, girt with mercy round,
Thy truth, my God, I sing,
And wake the harp's and psalt'ry's sound
To Israel's holy King.

My hymn and ransom'd heart
To thee shall always rise;

For lo, th' ensnarer drops his dart,
And, sham'd and silent, flies.

NOTES.—This Psalm is without superscription. It is, however, ascribed by many to the old age of David, and to the occasion of his flight from Absalom.

Bishop Jewel requested that it might be sung by those around him, just before his death. It was read also to the excellent Jones of Nayland in his last moments; and at the end he added, with great mildness and composure, "if this be dying, I had no idea what dying was before."

In thee, O Lord, I trust. This is also the beginning of the thirty-first Psalm. Transferred into the Te Deum, "in te, Domine, speravi," it formed the last words of Cardinal Ximenes.

While wond'ring throngs adore. They are represented as wondering at the greatness of the deliverance.

And cast me not away. Bucer repeated these words in his last hours.

PSALM LXXII.

Give, Lord, the king, the kingly heir,
Thy sceptre and thy rod:
So shall the meek his justice share,
The people of our God.

The mountain's sides with peace shall wave,
And truth the hills shall crown:
His arm the sons of want shall save,
And break th' oppressor down.

Long as the sun shall mount in light,
Or moons shall wax and wane,
While age by age sweeps on its flight,
Shall mortals fear thy reign.

He shall come down, as trickling show'rs,
O'er verdant meadows flow;
And still the just shall bloom as flow'rs
And peace, like spring, shall glow.

From sea to sea, from Eastern streams
To earth's untrodden end,
His crown shall pour its glorious beams,
His foes in dust shall bend.

The desert tribes, the island kings,
With costly gifts shall wait;
Sheba, and Seba, and the wings
Of Tarshish' golden freight.

All monarchs at his feet shall bow,
All realms shall be his land;
For he shall hear the suff'rer's vow,
And help the helpless hand.

His grace the humble shall redeem
From hostile fraud and strife;
And precious in his high esteem
Shall be their guarded life.

So shall he live, through endless days,
Mid Sheba's treasures crown'd;
And for his sake shall pray'r and praise
Lift high their daily sound.

The blade that on the mountain starts
Like Lebanon shall nod:
As fair shall bloom the crowded marts
As blooms the rural sod.

His name shall stand, when last the sun
Shall tinge the purple West;
And ev'ry kingdom, link'd in one,
Shall bless him, and be bless'd.

Forever prais'd be God the Lord,
Our Israel's Saviour strong:
Let all the earth his name record,
His glorious praise prolong!
Amen, Amen.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of Solomon." It has been frequently supposed to relate to this king, and to have been written by David in anticipation of the accession of his son. But it is possible, also, that Solomon, amidst the glories of his own reign, may have looked forward to the happier kingdom of the Messiah, and have thus sung of its peace.

The mountain's sides with peace shall wave. The boldness of these figures will not surprise any reader of the Scriptures; though, in a writer of our own climate and age, it might be startling.

From sea to sea, from Eastern streams. The Euphrates is "the river," which is here employed, as if to denote the Eastern limits of the world.

Sheba, and Seba, and the wings. Sheba was probably a region of Arabia Felix, or a country on the opposite shore in Africa, renowned for its gold and spices. Seba was the name of a country and city of Ethiopia; the celebrated Meroe of the ancients.

The blade that on the mountain starts. A little grass, on a barren mountain, is an apt figure of the beginning of the church of Christ; and Lebanon, nodding with all its cedars, does not too boldly express its growth.

As fair shall bloom the crowded marts. The universal effects and progress of the Gospel seem to be denoted by this universal beauty of nature.

This Psalm closes the second Book of the Masoretic division; and is followed by these words, "the Prayers of David the Son of Jesse are ended." It is possible that some earlier collection of Psalms closed with this. Otherwise it would be hard to explain such an addition, since there are many other Psalms, after this, which are ascribed to David, and many which are undoubtedly from his hand.

PSALM LXXIII.

Yes, to Israel God is kind,
Gracious to the pure in mind:
Yet, with thronging doubts assail'd,
Once my feet almost had fail'd.

Weak I paus'd, and wav'ring stood;
For I mark'd th' ungodly's good;
And my heart, in envious gloom,
Watch'd the sinner's prosp'rous doom.

On in fearless strength they tread,
Till they slumber with the dead;

Naught they know of mortal cares,
Mortal burden ne'er was theirs.

Therefore pride their necks hath bound;
Strife, as raiment, wraps them round:
Swell their eyes, with lux'ry blind;
Fortune leaves their wish behind.

High and cruel words they pour;
High their tyrant boastings soar:
Heav'n their mouth's defiance hears,
And their tongue o'er earth careers.

So return their people still,
Joy's wild cup to drain and fill:
"How shall God discern?" they cry;
"Is there knowledge hid on high?"

Lo, th' ungodly prosper so;
So their peaceful riches grow:
From my hands and heart in vain
I have wash'd the guilty stain.

Still till eve my spirit pines,
On my woe the morning shines:
Yet, if thus my lips shall say,
From thy children I shall stray.

So my dazzled eyes and thought
Long in vain repose had sought,
Till to God's high courts I drew;
There the sinner's end I knew.

On a slipp'ry path they go,
To a sudden, swift o'erthrow:
In a moment they decay,
And in terrors pass away.

As the morning dreamer wakes,
So the Lord their slumber breaks;

As a dream when sleep is past,
Flits their image on the blast.

Vainly was my bosom torn;
Foolish rose my doubt forlorn;
Senseless as the beasts that die,
I arraign'd the will most High.

Still by thee, with thee, I stand;
Thou hast held me by thy hand:
With thy counsel guide me now;
Then to glory welcome thou!

Whom have I in heav'n but thee?
Whom so dear on earth to me?
Heart and flesh may fail and pine;
God my strength shall then be mine;

Then, my fainting bosom's health,
Then, my soul's eternal wealth;
When the wand'rers from thy path
Perish in thy wasting wrath.

Lord my God, my soul is bless'd,
At thy feet to bow and rest:
All my trust to God shall cling,
While his wondrous works I sing.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of Asaph." The bold and lofty style, and the didactic character, mark it as indeed the production of that majestic singer.

Yes, to Israel God is kind. This abrupt beginning is very expressive of the conflicting thoughts of the poet.

Therefore, pride their necks hath bound. Pride is compared with a chain of gold, bound about the neck.

Swell their eyes, with lux'ry blind. So Eliphaz, (Job xv. 27.) speaking of the wicked,

"Because he covereth his face with his fatness."

And their tongue o'er earth careers. It goes abroad, like a robber, to destroy the character and the happiness of many.

So return their people still. The elliptical conciseness of the original renders this passage very obscure; but the sense which is here given seems best to harmonize with the tenor of what precedes and follows.

Till to God's high courts I drew. This may be an instance, I believe, of that mode of speech in which the outward forms and worship of the Mosaic system are distinctly named as the figure of something inward and spiritual. For, it was in communion with God and in the study of his word that the Psalmist learned this truth, but perhaps not from any immediate instruction in the temple or synagogue.

PSALM LXXIV.

Oh, wherefore mourn we, God of grace,
Forever exil'd from thy face?
Why thus around thy flock and fold
Has wrath's hot smoke its blackness roll'd?

Think on the people thou hast bought,
The tribes thine arm from bondage brought;
Think on Mount Sion's chosen halls,
And turn thee tow'rds their wasted walls.

The foe's bold feet profane thy soil;
Thy foes rush in with crime and spoil:
They shout within thy place of pray'r,
And lift their conqu'ring standards there.

Once, he whose arm was strong to fell,
In the thick forest prov'd it well:
But now the axe and hammer ring,
Where down the chisell'd work they fling.

They give thy temple to the blaze,
Thy name's abode they stain and raze:
"Destroy we all," their hearts exclaim,
And all the land sends up the flame.

No house of God its portal rears;
No sign in heav'n or earth appears;
No prophet pours a soothing song;
And no man's heart can tell how long.

How long, O God, shall hate revile?
How long thy foes blaspheming smile?
Why lies thy arm'd right hand in rest?
Oh, pluck it from thy sheathing breast!

God is our King from days of old;
The earth thy saving strength has told:
Thy might the roaring waters clave,
And crush'd the dragons of the wave.

It trampled down the monster's head;
The desert dwellers saw and fed:
It op'd the fount, the torrent's tide,
And mighty streams it check'd and dried.

The day is thine, the night is thine;
By thee the sunbeams rise and shine;
Earth's utmost borders thou hast spann'd,
And all the seasons praise thy hand.

Remember, Lord, th' opposers' crowd,
The fool's blasphemings, bold and loud:
Forsake not thou thy mourning dove,
But shield the people of thy love.

Think on the cov'nant: ev'ry clime
Sees the dark holds of cruel crime:
Oh, turn not back th' oppress'd with shame;
Let want and woe extol thy name.

Arise, O God, thy cause maintain;
Think on the fools' blaspheming train;
Forget thou not their guilty cry;
Each day, each hour, it swells on high!

NOTES.—"A Poem of Asaph." This title, however, must be incorrect, as the Psalm is obviously from a later age; and no other occasion can well be fixed for the events to which it alludes, except the victorious assault of the Chaldeans upon the city, and its subsequent desolation. Archbishop Secker judges it probable that this Psalm and some others describe prophetically the present condition of the Jews.

Once he whose arm was strong to fell. Mr. Merrick gives a slightly different sense, with elegance, though diffusely;

> "As when the woodman's stroke invades
> The lofty grove's thick-woven shades,
> So through thy temple's awful bounds
> Now here, now there, the axe resounds;
> And down in shapeless ruins fall
> The sculptures fair that grac'd its wall,
> Rich with the forest's noblest spoil,
> And wrought by heaven-directed toil."

Mr. Goode has still another idea;

> "Once the wise, with skilful hand,
> Where the trees thick shading stand,
> O'er the boughs the axe inclin'd,
> For the temple's use design'd.
> But, alas! with impious stroke
> Now its beauteous frame is broke;
> Torn from off its sacred walls,
> Carv'd with art, its glory falls.

No house of God its portal rears. Synagogues seem not yet to have been established; but there may have been places of resort for religious instruction, not altogether unlike them; for the people appear to have gone, for such purposes, to the prophets and priests.

No prophet pours his soothing song. Jeremiah was, indeed, living; but he had been persecuted, and forbidden to prophesy; nor is a single expression of this kind, in poetry, to be pressed in the utmost strictness of possible interpretation.

And crush'd the dragons of the wave. Pharaoh and his host are compared with the crocodiles and other monstrous animals of the Red Sea.

The desert dwellers saw and fed. The bodies cast upon the shore were devoured by the wild beasts which inhabit the wilderness; or, perhaps, plundered by the neighbouring tribes.

Forsake not thou thy mourning dove. This is the well known emblem of the afflicted church.

PSALM LXXV.

To thee, O God, our praise we owe,
To thee our praise we pay:
Thy wondrous works, that round us glow,
Thy radiant name display.

When I th' assembly's sceptre take,
With me shall justice reign:
Earth and its nations pine and quake;
Its pillars I maintain.

"Be fools no more," to fools I cried,
"Nor lift your impious horn;
Lift high no more the horn of pride,
Nor boast with necks of scorn.

No breeze from East or West or South
Can pow'r and honour blow;
One righteous word from God's own mouth
Exalts and levels low."

In God's right hand a wine-cup gleams,
Its brim is sparkling high;
He pours for guilt its blood-red streams,
And guilt must drain them dry.

But I to Jacob's God will wake
My ceaseless song and vow:
My might th' ungodly's horn shall break,
And lift the righteous brow.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, Destroy not, a Psalm or Song of Asaph." It is impossible to determine its true origin; but if it was from Asaph, the second verse must relate exclusively to Christ.

Nor lift your impious horn. As the sign of strength and pride in those beasts that bear it, the horn became the emblem of these qualities in man. So Horace, addressing wine,

"Addis cornua pauperi."

Carm. L. 3. v. 15, 18.

Thou giv'st the poor man horns of might.

So also Ovid,

"Tunc pauper cornua sumit."

Ar. Am. L. i. 239.

Then the poor beggar takes the horns of pride.

PSALM LXXVI.

Our God in Israel's songs is great,
  His name in Judah known;
In Salem shines his kingly state,
  And Sion is his throne.

There brake his hands the hostile bow,
  And dash'd its lightnings wide:
The shield and sword were trampled low,
  And war's wild tumult died.

Fair mount, with God's own presence crown'd,
  More strong is thine array,
Than tenfold hosts that guard around
  The robber's hills of prey.

The stout of heart were spoil'd in flight;
  A deadly sleep they slept:
Not one of all the men of might
  His hand's old cunning kept.

O Jacob's God, at thy command
  Chariot and steed went down:
Thou, thou art dreadful; who can stand
  Before thine angry frown?

From heav'n thy voice its thunders gave,
  And earth stood still, and fear'd;
When God, the humble souls to save,
  His arm in judgment rear'd.

The wrath of man thy praise shall bring;
  Its remnant thou shalt stay:
Ye nations, vow to God your King,
  Your homage vow, and pay.

From far and near, with off'rings bow'd,
  His awful throne adore;

His awful throne, who quells the proud,
The kings of ev'ry shore.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician on the stringed instruments, a Psalm or Song of Asaph." It is commonly supposed to have been written after the destruction of the army of Sennacherib.

And dash'd its lightnings wide. The lightnings of the bow are its arrows, which are made powerless by divine intervention.

The robber's hills of prey. However strongly defended may be the castles and holds of the wicked, they are not so impregnable as the city where the Lord has his dwelling.

Its remnant thou shalt stay. I have followed the authorized translation, though the exact meaning is not very well decided. De Wette would render it, "with the last anger thou girdest thyself;" in the sense that, as a warriour reserves his last weapons for extreme need, so God reserves his extraordinary judgments for extraordinary emergencies.

PSALM LXXVII.

My voice to God ascends;
To God my voice shall cry:
I seek the Lord, whose ear attends,
Though trouble clouds the sky.

All night my hands I spread,
Nor rest nor comfort bear;
Grief's wildest waves o'erflow my head,
And groans are all my pray'r.

I think on thee, and sigh;
My weary lips are dumb:
Sleep flies afar my straining eye,
That strains to see thee come.

I think on days of old,
On years departed long,
With mine own breast communion hold,
And wake my nightly song.

Then asks my anxious heart,
"Will God forever spurn?
And shall his mercy quite depart,
His smile no more return?

Forgets the Lord his grace,
His promise pledg'd of old?
Or shall no more his heav'nly place
Its gates of love unfold?"

But other thoughts reply,
"There spake a heart that bleeds:"
Thy years I ponder, Hand most High,
And think on all thy deeds.

Thy fame my lips shall sound;
Thine ancient might I see:
Thy path, O God, is holy ground;
Oh, who is God like thee?

Thy might, O wondrous God,
Far o'er the nations beam'd,
When first thy red right arm and rod
Thy patriarch's sons redeem'd.

The waters saw thee, Lord;
The waters saw thy look;
They fear'd to hear thy thund'ring word;
The depth's high caverns shook.

In floods the clouds came down;
Thy voice was in the sky;
And mid the whirlwind's black'ning frown
Thine arrows hurtled by.

Thy thunders roll'd in heav'n,
Thy lightnings lit the world,
And earth beneath thy feet was riv'n,
And ocean's billows curl'd.

There went thy steps unseen;
The waves withheld their shock;
Moses and Aaron pass'd between;
The shepherds and the flock.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, for Jeduthun, a Psalm of Asaph." The occasion of this beautiful Psalm must remain in obscurity. It is only evident that it was some period of affliction.

To God my voice shall cry. The repetition is natural, in great earnestness of grief.

Thy years I ponder, Hand most High. In the remembrance of the ancient wonders of God, when he led the Israelites from Egypt through the Red Sea, the Psalmist finds triumphant consolation.

PSALM LXXVIII.

Hear this my law; my people, hear;
And give my words your patient ear;
My lips with lessons wise shall flow,
My mouth shall ancient secrets show.

We heard them from our hoary sires,
Nor on our tongues the tale expires;
Our sons the Lord's high praise shall swell,
And far his glorious wonders tell.

For he a law in Jacob set,
And sire and son might ne'er forget;
Our sires preserv'd it for their heirs,
Our sons shall yield it pure to theirs;

That on their God they rest them still,
And love his name, and work his will,
Nor, like their fathers' faithless heart,
From God's unchanging cause depart.

So Ephraim's archers turn'd away,
And fled in battle's stormy day,
Forsook his cov'nant and his law,
Forgot the works their fathers saw;

The wonders wrought on Egypt's strand,
The signs in Zoan's fruitful land;
He cleft their passage through the deep,
And pil'd the billows' rampart heap.

He march'd before their fainting sight,
A cloud by day, a fire by night;
He smote the rock, and waters burst,
And desert torrents cool'd their thirst.

They sinn'd the more; and pride and lust
Denied the arm most High their trust:
Their hearts the Lord's long-suff'ring tried,
Their murm'ring lips for banquets cried.

"Can God e'en here a table spread,
And give his people plenteous bread?
He smote the rock, and torrents pour'd;
Can that same hand heap high our board?"

Then heard the Lord, and fast as fire
Through Israel swept his blazing ire:
On unbelief its vengeance came,
And harden'd hearts provok'd the flame.

For he had op'd th' eternal doors,
And bade the clouds unlock their stores:
The manna's grain of heav'n they rain'd,
And food from angels man sustain'd.

But now he sent the eastern blast,
And in his pow'r the south wind pass'd;
And flesh, like dust, o'erspread the land,
And birds, like ocean's countless sand.

Through all their camp it lay around;
At ev'ry tent it strew'd the ground:
They feasted long as lust could crave,
For all their heart's desire he gave.

But ere their joyous tumult ceas'd,
The wrath of God disturb'd the feast;
He smote the rev'llers in their pride,
And Israel's chosen bow'd and died.

Again, again, they rush'd to sin,
Nor all his works their trust could win:
And therefore sped their days and years
In fruitless toil and frequent tears.

Bow'd down beneath his wasting rod,
They early turn'd, and sought their God;
To God their Rock they rais'd their eye,
To their Redeemer, God most High.

But vain the vows their sorrow wrung,
And falsely pray'd their trembling tongue;
Their treach'rous heart was never true,
And far his cov'nant's bands they threw.

Yet oft the gracious God forgave;
He stay'd his wrath, he long'd to save:
He knew us flesh, howe'er we soar;
A wind that goes, and comes no more.

How many a time their souls rebell'd,
While yet their desert way they held;
Against their Lord to murmurs broke,
And dar'd their holy Sov'reign's stroke!

They thought not on his rescuing arm;
The day he sav'd from hate and harm;
The wonders wrought on Egypt's strand,
The signs in Zoan's fruitful land;

How, red with blood roll'd by the wave,
Nor one pure fount its waters gave;
How insect clouds above them low'r'd,
And marshy swarms their land devour'd.

The wasting worm laid bare their soil;
The locust reap'd their yearly toil;
Their vines to earth the hailstones bore,
Their spreading fig-trees leafless tore.

Their herds the tempest's prey he doom'd,
Their flocks his fiery shafts consum'd;
He sent them vengeance, wrath and woe,
And angels came for ill below.

He gave his fury pathway wide;
The pest swept onward, and they died:
On Egypt's chosen fell the sword;
The tents of Ham their flow'r deplor'd.

But forth, across the desert's sands,
Like flocks he led his people's bands:
With him they march'd, without a fear;
The whelming waters clos'd their rear.

To his own land their tribes he brought,
The holy mount his arm had bought;
Afar he strew'd the heathen hosts,
And Israel dwelt through all their coasts.

And yet was God most High defied;
Yet turn'd they from his laws aside;
Back, on their fathers' path, would go;
And started, like a treach'rous bow.

With idol shrines they mock'd the Lord;
He heard, and Israel's race abhorr'd:
No more his light on Shiloh glow'd,
The tent where God with men abode.

He gave his strength to stranger lands,
His glorious ark to foemen's hands:
The sword amid his people fed,
And in his wrath his chosen bled.

Red o'er their youths the death-fire blaz'd;
No nuptial song their virgins rais'd;
Their priesthood fell before their foes;
And yet no widow's wail arose.

Then woke the Lord, as dreamers wake,
When sleep and wine their soul forsake;
As starts a giant with a shout,
He chas'd their foes in shameful rout.

But not e'en then on Joseph's tent,
Or Ephraim's tribe, his choice was bent:
He chose the men of Judah's race;
He chose Mount Sion's holy place.

Firm as the heav'ns its base he cast,
Firm as the earth's foundations fast:
Then from the folds his servant led,
And fix'd the crown on David's head.

He brought him from the pasture's mead,
His Israel's flock to rule and feed:
He fed them with an upright heart,
And rul'd their way with princely art.

NOTES.—"A Poem of Asaph." It is probably ascribed to him with justice, and seems to have been composed during the reign of David, or immediately afterwards.

So Ephraim's archers turn'd away. There appears to be here an allusion to some historical circumstance, not recorded in the Scriptures.

The signs in Zoan's fruitful land. Zoan is given, in the version of the Septuagint, by Tanis, the name of the seat of the Pharaohs.

And started, like a treach'rous bow. They are compared with a bow, the string of which, starting accidentally from the hand, sends the arrow far aside from the mark.

No more his light on Shiloh glow'd. The calamitous wars with the Philistines are now introduced.

PSALM LXXIX.

O God, the heathen tread thy soil;
Thine holy house they stain and spoil;
And Sion's turrets heap the ground:
Thy saintly servants' flesh is giv'n
To beasts of earth and birds of heav'n,
And blood unburied streams around.

Scorn mocks our woe, where'er we turn:
How long, O Lord, shall vengeance burn?
And shall thy wrath no more forbear?
Oh, on the heathen pour its flame;
The hosts that call not on thy name,
That waste thine Israel's dwelling fair.

Oh, think not on transgressions past;
Thy mercy's shield around us cast;
And haste, for crush'd in dust we bow;
O God our Saviour, for thy sake,
Forgive our sins, our bondage break,
And shew thine ancient glory now.

Why should they cry, "where sleeps their God?"
Oh, for thy servants' bloody sod,
Reveal thy judgment in our sight:
Hear thou the pris'ner's contrite sigh,
And save the wretch who waits to die,
Save, in the greatness of thy might.

And let a sev'nfold vengeance rest
Hard on the proud blasphemer's breast,
Whose bold blasphemings round us ring;
While we, the people of thy fold,
Shall tell the works our eyes behold,
And thy dear praise forever sing.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of Asaph." It was probably written about the same period with the seventy-fourth, soon after the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans.

Oh, on the heathen pour its flame. This passage is found in the book of Jeremiah; (x. 25.) but which is the original, and which the quotation, may be doubtful.

Hard on the proud blasphemer's breast. So, in St. Luke; (vi. 38.) "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom." The figure is that of a person extending a vessel or cloth, which, when it is filled, overflows into his arms.

PSALM LXXX.

Shepherd of Israel, thou whose crook
Has led thy flock of Joseph's line,
Thou on whose throne the cherubs look,
Oh, hear our cry, and o'er us shine.

Oh, come while Rachel's children see,
And bare thine arm of saving might;
And turn us, Lord, once more to thee,
And lift thy smile, and all is light.

Lord God of hosts, when cease the years,
That wrath against our pray'rs shall glow?
Thou giv'st thy people bread of tears,
And bitter tears their cup o'erflow.

Our foes deride us while we flee;
Our conqu'rors o'er their captives fight:
But turn us, Lord of hosts, to thee,
And lift thy smile, and all is light.

Thou brought'st a vine from Egypt's strand,
And drav'st afar the heathen hosts;
It hung its foliage o'er the land,
It stretch'd its roots through all our coasts.

The hills beneath its shadow rose;
Its boughs like giant cedars spread;

They spread to where Euphrates flows,
  They spread to western ocean's bed.

Why mourns it now its guardless bow'rs,
  Its grapes, the scornful passer's spoil?
The field's wild brood its fruit devours;
  The forest boar uproots its soil.

O God of hosts, return thou yet,
  And see from heav'n this wasted vine;
The root that thy right hand hath set,
  The branch upheld and own'd for thine.

All burn'd or fell'd, it strews the sand;
  Yet all its foes thy frown shall blast:
Oh, on the man of thy right hand,
  Shew that strong hand forever fast.

So, from thy paths no more we flee:
  So, give us life, to praise thy might;
And turn us, God of hosts, to thee,
  And lift thy smile, and all is light.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician upon the six-stringed lyre, a Psalm of Asaph." It was probably one of the Psalms of the captivity.

Has led thy flock of Joseph's line. One family, one of the most distinguished, is mentioned for the whole of the posterity of Jacob. In the same manner, Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, all descended from Rachel, are afterwards mentioned instead of the nation. Although the ten tribes, as a body, had been led away captive by the Assyrians, yet undoubtedly multitudes were left behind, who, in a few generations, would again occupy, to no small extent, the place of their fathers. Merrick suggests that the Psalm may have been composed at a time when the territories of these tribes, who were neighbours, were threatened or invaded by an enemy.

And turn us, Lord, once more to thee. These words have the aspect of a chorus, to be chanted by the people.

Thou brought'st a vine from Egypt's strand. The same comparison is found in the fifth chapter of Isaiah.

They spread to where Euphrates flows. In the promise to Abraham, the Euphrates was fixed as the eastern boundary of his posterity. The kingdom of Solomon seems to have extended to the deserts on its banks.

Oh, on the man of thy right hand. This expression may denote the nation, mentioned either as an individual with whom God had entered into covenant by giving the right hand; or as one whom, with his right hand, he had selected and separated. In its highest sense, it is descriptive of Christ.

PSALM LXXXI.

Sing loud to God, our Saviour strong,
And shout to Jacob's King:
Awake the timbrel and the song,
And strike the silv'ry string.

With harp's and psaltry's pleasant tune,
With trumpets long and loud,
Rejoice beneath the early moon,
Amid the festal crowd.

For such the witness God decreed,
And such the law he gave,
To Jacob's sons, to Joseph's seed,
No longer Egypt's slave;

When, at his captive people's groan,
He came with judgments dread,
And forth, from realms of speech unknown,
Our rescued armies led.

"I from the load thy shoulder freed,
From servile clay thy hands;
I heard thee in thine hour of need,
And broke the tyrant's bands.

I answered thee from clouds on high,
Where storms and thunder hide;
I prov'd thee where, mid deserts dry,
The rock pour'd out its tide.

'Bear witness, people of my love;
O Israel, give thine ear:

Seek thou no other god above,
No stranger's idol fear.

I am the Lord, thy God of old;
Th' Egyptian chains I clave:
Oh, wide thy thirsty lips unfold,
And thirst no more shall crave.'

My people would not hear my voice;
My presence Israel spurn'd:
I gave them to their stubborn choice,
And where they would they turn'd.

Oh, had they listen'd, had they trod
Where God had been their Guide!
Their foes had crouch'd beneath my rod,
Their tyrant's boast had died.

The Lord's proud haters at their feet,
Their reign no more had ceas'd:
Their store had been the fatt'ning wheat,
The rock, their honey'd feast."

NOTES.—"For the chief musician upon the harp of Gath, a Psalm of Asaph." Townsend places it at the period of the dedication of the second temple. Others suppose it to have been prepared at an earlier date, to be sung at the season of the passover, or at the feast of trumpets.

The rock, their honey'd feast. In Palestine and the neighbouring countries, the wild bees deposit their honey in the clefts of rocks. This becomes the emblem of very great plenty, as if the very stones of the desert yielded delicious food.

PSALM LXXXII.

God stands amidst the throng
Of men in godlike place:
"How long in judgment give ye wrong,
And fear th' unrighteous face?

Guard ye the orphan's right;
Be each the suff'rer's friend;
And from th' oppressor's iron might
The guiltless poor defend."

They will not know, nor hear;
In darkness on they go;
While earth, o'erwhelm'd with crime and fear,
Heaves its deep base below.

I said, "as gods ye reign,
Children of God most High;"
But ye are still a mortal train,
E'en princes, doom'd to die.

O mighty God, arise;
O'er earth in judgment shine:
For all beneath the spreading skies,
All tribes and realms, are thine.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of Asaph." Its date and occasion can only be conjectured.

Of men in godlike place. They are called, in the original, gods; a name sometimes given to kings, or even, as is supposed, to judges. Our Saviour expressly says, (John x. 35.) "he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came;" in allusion to the fourth verse of this Psalm.

I said, "as gods ye reign." This is often taken as the language of the Lord, investing men with kingly dignity. I regard it rather as the words of the Psalmist.

PSALM LXXXIII.

Oh, keep not silence, God most High,
Nor give thine anger rest:
For lo, thy foes swell loud their cry,
And rear their impious crest.

Against thy chosen seed they stand,
And crafty counsels frame;

"Come, let us sweep from Israel's land
Its nation and its name."

Against thee, Lord, their pow'r consents,
Against thy holy place;
Ishmael and Moab, Edom's tents,
And Hagar's desert race;

Gebal and Ammon, Amalek's hosts,
And arm'd Philistia's plain:
And Assur's realms, and Tyre's rich coasts,
The sons of Lot sustain.

O'erthrow them, Lord, as thou of old
Didst Midian's arms o'erthrow;
As when the tide of battle roll'd
By Kishon's ancient flow:

There Hazor's flow'r and Jabin's pride
With Sisera fled away;
Or lay in Endor, side by side,
As vile as vilest clay.

Like Zeeb and Oreb be their lords,
Who God's own domes assail:
Like Zebah's and Zalmunna's words,
So let their boastings fail.

"Come up," they cry, "their walls are ours!"
But thou, my God, be there,
And whirl afar their broken pow'rs,
Like chaff that loads the air.

As fires along the woody steep
And o'er the forest blaze,
So let thy wrathful tempest sweep,
And scatter wild amaze.

Be shame and fear on ev'ry brow,
Till they shall seek thy name,

Or low in endless trouble bow,
And perish in their shame.

So all shall own thy name alone,
Jehovah, Lord most High;
And see and praise thy holy throne,
Supreme o'er earth and sky.

NOTES.—"An Ode and Psalm of Asaph." It is commonly supposed to have been written at some time when Israel was threatened by a numerous confederacy of enemies, consisting of the nations named in the Psalm. But the idea of DeWette seems worthy of attention: "what if this whole enumeration of names were only to be taken poetically, as carrying out the thought, that *all* the foes of the nation were united against it?"

And Hagar's desert race. The Chaldee Paraphrase has "the Arabians." In the first book of Chronicles, (v. 10, 19, 20.) the Hagarites are mentioned as a people dwelling eastward from Gilead, who were defeated by the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh.

Gebal and Ammon, Amalek's hosts. Gebal was a mountainous region, beyond Jordan.

And Assur's realms, and Tyre's rich coasts. The Hebrews had no mightier assailant than the sovereigns of Assyria.

Didst Midian's arms o'erthrow. It is the signal victory of Gideon, which is here the subject of allusion.

By Kishon's ancient flow. "That ancient river, the river Kishon;" (Judg. v. 21.) ancient, or of old renown.

Or lay in Endor, side by side. Endor was in the tribe of Manasseh; not far from Taanach and Megiddo, the scene of the defeat of Sisera.

Like Zeeb and Oreb be their lords. These, and Zebah and Zalmunna, were, it will be remembered, the Midianitish princes slain by Gideon.

And whirl afar their broken pow'rs. They are painted as rolled around by a whirlwind; which seems to be expressed by the word translated "wheel," in the common version.

PSALM LXXXIV.

O Lord of hosts, how lovely shine
The dwellings of thy grace!
How dear to me the courts divine
Of thy most holy place!

My pining soul with longing faints
The Lord's fair gates to see;
My heart and flesh with loud complaints,
Thou living God, for thee!

The sparrow finds her there a home;
The swallow builds her nest:
Around thy altars, Lord, they come,
And lay their young to rest.

O Lord of hosts, my King and God,
How bless'd are they who dwell
Within the courts thy saints have trod,
And all thy glory tell!

How bless'd are they, whose strength thou art;
Whose lips but sing thy praise;
Who bear, within their inmost heart,
The mem'ry of thy ways!

Along the thirsty vale of tears,
With vig'rous step they go:
The early rain their journey cheers,
The sparkling fountains flow.

From strength to strength ascend their feet,
And brighter joys are near;
Till all, in Sion's holy seat,
Before our God appear.

Lord God of hosts, oh, hear my cry,
Thou God of Jacob's line;
O God our Shield, with fav'ring eye
On thine anointed shine.

For in thy courts one single day
With richer bliss shall glide,
Than thousands give or waft away
In all the world beside.

I love the threshold at the gate
Where dwells my God within:
More dear to me, e'en there to wait,
Than rule the tents of sin.

For God the Lord, our Sun and Shield,
Shall grace and glory shed,
Nor one kind gift disdain to yield,
Where upright spirits tread.

O God of hosts, the mighty Lord,
How richly bless'd is he,
Whose hope shall bring its sure reward,
Forever fix'd on thee!

NOTES.—"For the chief musician upon the harp of Gath, a Psalm of the sons of Korah." It somewhat resembles the forty-second, though its tone is less mournful. A devout soul celebrates the temple, and the joy of those who go up thither to worship, or there spend their days; but still higher things are to be seen through the veil of this imagery.

The sparrow finds her there a home. The Psalmist contrasts his own separation from the house of God with the privilege of the very birds, who might make their nests around the walls of the sanctuary. It is not to be imagined that they came literally to the altar. In the second temple any lodgment of birds seems to have been prevented.

Along the thirsty vale of tears. There seems no need to suppose any one place, whether named Baca, or otherwise. "The valley of weeping" is any barren and rough vale; with which human life, viewed from its sorrowful side, may be compared. There is here, however, an evident allusion to the journeys of the Israelites, when, at the three great festivals, they came in companies to Jerusalem, from every quarter of the land.

From strength to strength ascend their feet. "I think with Geierus," says Mr. Merrick, "that the Hebrew may be translated *from strength to strength*, (answerably to the words *from faith to faith*, Rom. i. 17. and *from glory to glory*, 2 Cor. iii. 18.) and signify that, whereas other travellers grow more and more weary as they travel, each of the pious persons here described shall, by the refreshments administered to them, proceed from one degree of strength to another, *viresque acquirit eundo*."

On thine anointed shine. This expression may seem to fix the authorship of this Psalm, as to be ascribed to David or some other monarch. The king, however, is regarded as the representative of his nation; and, in praying for him, they pray for all. So the anointed Saviour stands in the stead of his church.

For in thy courts one single day. Dr. Durell quotes Cicero; Tusc. v. "O vitæ Philosophia dux! unus dies bene et ex præceptis tuis actus peccanti immortalitati est anteponendus." O Philosophy, thou guide of life! one day spent well and after thy precepts is better than an immortality of sin.

PSALM LXXXV.

Lord, thou hast bless'd our wasted land;
Thy terrors cease to burn;
And, led by thy deliv'ring hand,
Our captive tribes return.

Thy people's guilt is all forgiv'n,
Their sins are cover'd o'er;
Thy wrath's fierce storm has onward driv'n,
Thy smile has dawn'd once more.

O God our Saviour, turn us still,
And let thine anger end:
Or, shall its clouds of vengeful ill
From age to age descend?

Wilt thou not turn, that, glad in thee,
Thy people's heart may live?
Oh, give us, Lord, thy grace to see,
Thy full salvation give.

I hearken for the Lord's dear voice,
And hear him gently say
Peace to the people of his choice,
Who turn no more astray.

Oh, o'er the hearts that fear his name
His bright salvation glows:
So guards the Lord, in peaceful fame,
Our smiling land's repose.

And truth and mercy joy to meet,
And justice clings to love:
They bloom like flow'rs beneath our feet,
They shine, like stars, above.

God gives his grace, and o'er the land
The waving harvests spread:
Beneath his smile the righteous stand,
And he shall guide their tread.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of the sons of Korah." It was evidently written soon after the return from the captivity.

And truth and mercy joy to meet. The bold figures of this verse resemble those of Isaiah, (xlv. 8.)

> "Drop down, ye heavens, from above,
> And let the skies pour down righteousness:
> Let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation,
> And let righteousness spring up together."

PSALM LXXXVI.

Thy gracious ear incline,
And hear me, Lord, on high:
Preserve my soul, for I am thine,
And poor and lone I lie.

My God, thy servant save,
Whose hope on thee shall rest:
Each morn thy dawning aid I crave,
To light my fainting breast.

To thee my soul shall rise,
To God, whose grace forgives;
Whoe'er to thee for mercy cries,
In plenteous mercy lives.

Oh, hear my mournful prayer,
My suppliant groanings hear:
I call on thee in hours of care,
And know thine answer near.

Among the gods ador'd
The only God art thou;
There are no works like thine, O Lord;
All realms to thee shall bow.

Thou mad'st them, and their praise
Shall echo to thy throne;
For thou art great, and great thy ways;
The Lord is God alone.

Teach me the path of light,
That truth my steps may frame:
My spirit's wand'ring pow'rs unite,
To fear thy sov'reign name.

Thy praises, Lord my King,
My lips shall ceaseless tell,
And thy redeeming mercy sing,
That rais'd my soul from hell.

O God, the proud arise,
The murd'rers' dreadful band;
Against thy fear they close their eyes,
And leagu'd to slay me stand.

But thou, my Lord, art love,
A God with mercy crown'd;
High mount our sins, but high above,
Thy truth and grace abound.

Oh, turn in mercy mild,
And nerve thy servant's arm,
And save thine humble handmaid's child
From hosts that seek his harm.

Some happy sign bestow,
Before my haters' sight;
Till, in my strength asham'd they know
Thy comfort and thy might.

NOTES.—"A Prayer of David." Nothing is known of the origin of this Psalm; but it is probably ascribed to its true author.

My spirit's wand'ring pow'rs unite. The words seem to express the act of collecting the scattered and confused thoughts, to fix them upon God.

PSALM LXXXVII.

On the sacred mountains' steep,
Rest her old foundations deep:
None of Jacob's tented pow'rs,
Loves the Lord like Sion's tow'rs:
Glorious things of thee they tell,
City where our God shall dwell!

"I will name Philistia's line,
Rahab, Tyre and Babel mine;
And the Ethiop's sons shall meet,
Brethren all in Sion's seat;
All shall Sion's lineage claim,
All shall swell her spotless fame."

Her the Lord most High shall build,
Till her records bright be fill'd,
When at last he reads them o'er,
From the tribes of ev'ry shore:
There shall sound the harp and voice;
There, in thee, will I rejoice!

NOTES.—"A Psalm and Ode of the sons of Korah." It is a delightful prophecy of the glory of the church in the accession of the Gentiles." Bishop Horsley entitles it, "salvation is of the Jews." Bishop Hare, from its abrupt beginning, imagined it to be only the fragment of a Psalm. "But perhaps," says Mr. Edwards, "were the occasion of the author's writing it known, this abruptness would appear to be a beauty." We may add that, whatever may have been the occasion, it is certainly no poetical fault.

I will name Philistia's line. This verse is taken as the words of the Lord.

Rahab, Tyre and Babel mine. Rahab is a name of Egypt, but its origin and reason are unknown.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

Lord God my Saviour, day and night
I pray beneath thy searching sight:
Oh, bring my pray'r in mercy near,
And bend from heav'n thy list'ning ear.

My soul is fill'd with weary woes;
Around my life the shadows close:
A man, whose manly pow'rs are fled,
E'en now they count me with the dead;

With them who sink to earth's cold caves,
The prostrate, couch'd in bloody graves,
From thy forbearing mercy pass'd,
From thy strong hand to ruin cast.

There thou hast fix'd my cheerless doom,
Low in the depth's unfathom'd gloom:
Thy hand is heavy on my soul,
And all thy billows o'er me roll.

Thou turn'st aside my neighbour's face;
Afar he shuns my loath'd embrace:
And, prison'd where I cannot fly,
I close my dim, decaying eye.

To thee, each day, my pray'r is made,
To thee my hands are stretch'd for aid:
Oh, shall the dead thy wonders learn,
The dead to speak thy praise return?

Shall love be whisper'd in the grave,
Destruction tell thy truth to save?
In darkness shall thy wonders blaze,
Oblivion's land thy justice praise?

To thee, O Lord, to thee I cry;
My pray'r ascends the dawning sky:

Why leav'st thou me alone to stray,
And turn'st thy glorious face away?

E'en from my youth, with anguish torn,
Thy chast'ning stroke my soul hath borne:
Thy wrathful storm my path o'erflows;
Till day amidst thy terrors close.

With ceaseless swell around they roar,
A circling sea without a shore;
No form of friend or brother nigh,
No sight of love to light mine eye!

NOTES.—"An Ode and Psalm of the sons of Korah, for the chief musician, to be sung to the flutes; a Poem of Heman the Ezrahite." Heman was a sage and musician of the time of Solomon, and a descendant of Korah.

A man, whose manly pow'rs are fled. The whole description is obviously, throughout the Psalm, that of a person groaning under some loathsome and intolerable disease. A spiritual interpretation of the whole is neither contrary to the genius of biblical poetry, nor otherwise in the least degree improbable.

PSALM LXXXIX.

Thy mercies, Lord, shall fill my song;
It tells thy truth while ages fly:
I know thy mercies' endless throng,
Thy truth, as firm as heav'n on high.

For thou hast said, "mine oath is pass'd,
To David, to my chosen friend;
Thy throne shall stand, forever fast,
Thy kingly seed shall never end."

O Lord, the heav'ns thy might record;
Their holy hosts thy praises sing:
For who in heav'n is like the Lord,
Who, mid the gods, like God our King?

Thou God, before whose heav'nly state
Thy saints in sacred rev'rence bow,
Lord God of Hosts, oh, who is great,
Or who enrob'd with truth, as thou?

Thou rul'st the angry ocean's tide,
And bidd'st its swelling waves repose:
Thou tramplest down the hosts of pride,
And strew'st afar thy broken foes.

The heav'ns are thine, and thine the earth;
Thou fram'd'st the land, and thou the sea:
Thou gav'st the North and South their birth,
Tabor and Hermon shout to thee.

Thine arm has empire all its own;
High holds thy strong right hand its sway:
Justice and judgment rear thy throne,
And truth and grace prepare thy way.

How bless'd to know thy trumpet's voice,
And walk beneath thy guiding eye!
Each day in thee shall such rejoice,
And thy just pow'r shall lift them high.

For thou our beauteous strength shalt yield,
Thy love our lofty horn maintains:
The Lord is still our saving Shield;
The holy King in Israel reigns.

In visions, to thy sainted seer,
Thou spak'st of old, "with succour crown'd,
A Hero and a Head I rear,
Amidst my lowly people found.

On David's, on my servant's brow,
By me the kingly oil is pour'd;
My hand shall ne'er his sceptre bow,
My arm shall urge his conqu'ring sword.

No foe shall hurl him from his seat,
No tyrant mock his fallen state;
His foes shall crouch beneath his feet,
And I will waste the bands of hate.

My truth and love shall guard his reign;
In my strong name his horn shall soar:
His hand shall reach the Western main,
His right the Eastern torrent's shore.

'Father and Saviour,' he shall cry,
'To thee, my Rock, in hope I cling;'
And I will give his birthright high,
My firstborn's place, o'er ev'ry king.

For him my mercy shall endure,
My cov'nant stand, and ne'er be vain;
His seed shall rise in glory sure,
His throne as heav'n's own days remain.

If yet his children's wand'ring heart
My just commandments e'er forsake,
From my unchanging paths depart,
And o'er my gracious cov'nant break;

Then, on their sins the rod shall fall,
And chast'ning stripes their soul shall grieve;
But I will ne'er my truth recall,
Nor all my ancient favour leave.

I will not break my cov'nant fast,
Nor change what once my lips have seal'd:
My oath was once to David pass'd,
And falsehood ne'er that oath shall yield;

His seed shall rise, forever sure;
His throne shall stand, while yet on high
The sun or moon rolls on secure,
With each true witness of the sky."

But thine anointed leav'st thou now,
And look'st in stern abhorrence down:
Thou scorn'st his cov'nant and his vow,
And fling'st to earth his kingly crown.

And thou hast broke his stately wall,
And cast his rampart to the ground;
The passing step insults its fall,
And scorn and hatred shout around.

Thou giv'st his foes the conqu'ror's pride,
Thou lift'st on high his tyrants' hand;
Thou turn'st his sword's keen edge aside,
Nor yield'st his armies strength to stand.

Thou sweep'st his glory to decay,
And heap'st his prostrate throne with dust:
Thou end'st in clouds his youthful day,
And shame envelops all his trust.

How long, O Lord, withdraws thy face?
Shall vengeance blaze, and never wane?
Oh, think how short my weary race:
Oh, wherefore mad'st thou all in vain?

Where lives the man who shall not see
The last dim hour, the closing breath?
Oh, who can hold his spirit free
From bondage in the realms of death?

Where lies thy mighty love at rest,
Thy love, of old to David sworn?
Oh, think how long thy servant's breast
His load of false reproach has borne;

Reproach from nations' impious wrath,
From hosts that me and thee abhorr'd,
And curs'd thine own anointed's path!
Yet, bless'd forever be the Lord!
Amen. Amen.

NOTES.—A Poem of Ethan the Ezrahite." Ethan is associated with Heman, both in the mention of his wisdom (1 Kings iv. 31.) and of his station as a leader of the music, (1 Chron. xv. 19.) This Psalm, however, must have been written at a later and less flourishing period of the Jewish monarchy.

To David, to my chosen friend. The promise was that which was especially given through Nathan the prophet. (2 Sam. vii.)

Tabor and Hermon shout to thee. Mount Tabor being in the western part of Galilee, and the ridge of Hermon or Anti-Libanus stretching to the north-east towards Damascus, they might be regarded as representing the West and East.

How bless'd to know thy trumpet's voice. The people were called to their holy assemblies by the sound of the trumpet.

For thou our beauteous strength shalt yield. "The glory of their strength" expresses all in which they might exult, or which could adorn them.

In visions, to thy sainted seer. Nathan is probably meant; possibly David himself.

His right the Eastern torrent's shore. This, again, is the Euphrates.

His throne shall stand, while yet on high. It is hardly possible not to discern in these magnificent promises the eternal glory of Christ, the son of David.

With each true witness of the sky. Sun, moon and stars are made the witnesses of the covenant; and we may include, too, angels and archangels.

But thine anointed leav'st thou now. How impressive is the transition, at the moment when the prophecy had reached its loftiest strain!

Thou end'st in clouds his youthful day. Jehoiachin, to whom this allusion may possibly be referred, ascended the throne at the age of eighteen years, and reigned but three months.

Amen. Amen. This is the end of the third Book of the Psalms; and perhaps the ascription of praise at the close belongs not to the Psalm itself, here, or in the other instances of a similar nature.

PSALM XC.

O Lord, through rolling ages past
Our fathers' shelt'ring home,
And still our children's refuge fast
Through rolling years to come;

Ere thou hadst rear'd the mountain's brow,
Or made this vale of tears,

From years eternal, God art thou,
To still eternal years.

But man his last, forgotten way,
At thy commandment goes:
Thou speak'st, "return, ye sons of clay,"
And all their journeyings close.

A thousand years beneath thy sight
Like yester evening seem,
Like one short watch of silent night,
A slumb'rer's fleeting dream.

Thy floods sweep o'er us, and we pass,
As meadow flow'rets fade;
Fair blooms at morn the waving grass,
And falls ere evening's shade.

For in thy wrath's consuming might
Our spirits droop and die:
Our secret sins are spread in light
Beneath thy piercing eye.

Swift, like a tale, is gone the space
Assign'd to mortal men;
And scarce thy wrath allows the race
To threescore years and ten:

Or if, by strength, some hoary head
Its fourscore winters bear,
Yet weak the strength, and sad the tread
That bows with weary care.

So soon must life on pinions flee,
So swift our joys depart:
Yet, who will all thy terrors see,
And fear thee as thou art?

Oh, teach us, teach us, Lord, to learn
The measure of our days;

That so our wand'ring steps may turn
To thy true wisdom's ways.

Return, O Lord! how long? how long?
Oh, yield thy servants peace;
And early wake our grateful song
To joy that shall not cease.

As thou hast giv'n us weary days,
And shown us years of woe,
So give us on thy light to gaze,
So yet thy glory show.

And on us, Lord, and on our seed,
Let thy fair favour shine:
And build the work our hands would speed,
Oh, build it firm for thine.

NOTES.—"A Prayer of Moses the man of God." If this superscription declare the real origin of the Psalm, it was doubtless written while the generation that came out of Egypt were dying in the wilderness. It seems so improbable that a single Psalm should be chosen from the whole collection, and marked with a date of such great antiquity, in the mere caprice of conjecture, that I am inclined to believe it indeed the work of Moses.

Like one short watch of silent night. The night, among the ancient Hebrews, was divided into three watches. In the time of our Saviour, there were four, after the custom of the Romans.

Swift, like a tale, is gone the space. An eloquent writer illustrates this allusion by the love of the Orientals for stories of every kind, to which they will listen, gathered around their fires in the desert by night, with breathless attention; till the tale is ended, and seems to have occupied but a moment.

PSALM XCI.

Whoe'er in God's pavilion deep
His peaceful home has made,
Shall still his soul in safety keep
Beneath th' Almighty's shade.

O Lord most High, I cry to thee,
'Thou art my hope and tow'r;
To thee my trusting heart shall flee
In danger's stormy hour.'

The Lord shall hear his servant's pray'r,
And guide the faithful feet,
To shun the secret fowler's snare,
The plague's devouring heat.

Beneath his mercy's downy wing
Thy faith shall find its rest:
His truth shall shield and buckler fling
Around thy cheerful breast.

Thou shalt not fear the evening blight,
The daily shaft nor bow;
The pest that walks at dead of night,
The noonday slaughter's blow.

A thousand on thy right shall lie,
Ten thousand at thy side;
But thou shalt see th' ungodly die,
And thou unharm'd abide.

Because thou mad'st the Lord thy dread,
Thy hope and shelt'ring dome,
No ill shall strike thy guarded head,
No plague approach thy home.

For he shall charge his angel bands
To keep thy pathway lone;
And, lifted on their gentle hands,
Thou shalt not touch a stone.

The lion's lair, the adder's brake,
Thy fearless heel shall tread,
And trample down the coiling snake,
And spurn the monster's bed.

"Because to mine own name he gave
His stedfast fear and love,
I, in his need, will speed to save,
And plant his feet above.

My ear shall hear his suppliant voice,
My lips his praise decree:
In length of days shall such rejoice,
And my salvation see."

NOTES.—This Psalm has no superscription. The Jews imagine that, in all such instances, the superscription of the preceding Psalm embraces those that follow without title; and they would therefore ascribe this to Moses. There is no reason, however, for the establishment of any such rule. Michaelis supposes that, in this noble ode, two choirs respond to one another.

Whoe'er in God's pavilion deep. Bishop Lowth, in his Lectures, has given a Latin version of this Psalm, the beginning of which, although not a literal translation in its form, is exceedingly beautiful.

"Qui habitat in secretis Altissimi,
Qui in umbram Omnipotentis sese receptat;
Qui dicit Jehovæ, Spes mea et propugnaculum meum!
Deus meus, in quo confidam"—

then, apostrophizing the saint who has thus been described;

"Ille profecto te eripiet,
E laqueo venatoris, e peste exitiali."

There may be an allusion, in this first verse, to the sacred laws of hospitality.

To shun the secret fowler's snare. Any enemy may be meant; but Bishop Heber has forcibly applied the image to the temptations of our greatest enemy:

"When the soul struggles in the Fowler's snare,
Help, Saviour, by thy cross and crimson stain,
Nor let thy glorious blood be spill'd in vain!"

For he shall charge his angel bands. This is the passage cited by the Tempter, when he would have persuaded Jesus to cast himself from the pinnacle of the temple.

And spurn the monster's bed. The original names the young lion and the dragon; but the former could not be mentioned in the translation without an unpleasant repetition.

Because to mine own name he gave. Without any form of introduction, God is evidently here represented as speaking, and sealing all which had gone before by his express promise.

PSALM XCII.

Good is the work, with songs to raise,
O Lord most High, thy grateful praise;
To shew thy love at morning light,
And tell thy truth each peaceful night;

With harp and lute thy name to sing,
With harp and lyre of tenfold string;
To wake the psalt'ry's solemn sound,
And pour rejoicing music round.

Thy works, O Lord, are all my joy;
Thy works shall all my praise employ:
How high thy glorious wonders rise!
How deep thy mighty counsel lies!

So sees not, Lord, the godless heart,
Nor knows how soon its joys depart:
When all the proud like grass are green,
Then swift destruction glides unseen.

For thou, O Lord, art thron'd on high,
And at thy word the guilty die:
For lo, the foes that scorn'd at thee,
For lo, thy foes in ruin flee.

But strength above the wild-deer's horn
Shall mine anointed head adorn;
Mine eye shall see my prostrate foes,
Mine ear shall hear their fearful close.

Like lofty palms the just abide,
Like cedars on Libanus' side;
In God's own courts are planted fair,
And rise, and bloom, and flourish there.

High spread their boughs, and deep their root,
And, green in age, they bend with fruit:

Thus shines the Lord our strength to view,
And thus his promise still is true.

NOTES.—"A Psalm and Song for the Sabbath-day." According to the Talmud, there were Psalms appointed for each day of the week; but this title probably expresses the original occasion on which the present Psalm was composed, or for which it was prepared. The Rabbins say that it was sung by Adam, on the day after his creation.

But strength above the wild-deer's horn. This word, as has been before remarked, seems very probably to mean the bison or buffalo. But I have chosen rather to follow here the opinion of those who believe it to have been the oryx, or antelope, than to introduce a name less familiar in our poetical language.

Like lofty palms the just abide. The stateliness and beauty of this tree are well known; its longevity perhaps not so well. It was an opinion of the ancients, that the palm was immortal; at least, that if it died, it recovered, and obtained a second life by renewal. Hence it was the emblem of immortality. It was also supposed to rise under a weight, and to thrive in proportion as it was depressed.

In God's own courts are planted fair. In the East, trees are often planted in the court-yard of a house.

PSALM XCIII.

The Lord is King in realms of light;
With glory rob'd, on high he reigns:
The Lord is rob'd with sov'reign might,
And earth's foundations strong sustains.

He fix'd the skies, the seas, the lands,
And naught can change their place or way:
Thy throne, O Lord, eternal stands,
Thy years are one unfading day.

The floods, O Lord, lift up their voice,
The mighty floods lift up their roar;
The floods in tumult loud rejoice,
And climb in foam the sounding shore.

But, mightier than the mighty sea,
The Lord of glory reigns on high:

Far o'er its waves we look to thee,
And see their fury break and die.

Thy word is true, thy promise sure,
That ancient promise, seal'd in love.
Oh, be e'en here thy temple pure,
As thy pure mansions shine above.

NOTES.—*The Lord is rob'd with sov'reign might.* The repetition, in the first, third, and fourth verses, is a characteristic feature of this Psalm, and contributes to its majesty. This becomes more evident in a literal translation.

The floods, O Lord, lift up their voice. The tumultuous roar of the waves may represent the clamour of a host of enemies. All men and all nations who oppose the word and cause of God are thus, perhaps, compared with the billows which cannot go beyond their bound.

PSALM XCIV.

Lord God of vengeance, light the skies
With judgment's fiery cloud:
O God of vengeance just, arise,
And recompense the proud.

How long shall guilt, O Lord of hosts,
How long shall guilt rejoice?
How long the wicked make their boasts,
And lift their scornful voice?

They trample down the humble race,
And slay the seed oppress'd,
The widow in her child's embrace,
The orphan, and the guest.

They mock their victims, as they bleed;
They mock their parting groans;
"The Lord," they cry, "shall never heed,
The Lord, whom Jacob owns."

O souls most dark! behold and fear:
How long refuse ye light?
Shall he not hear, who fram'd the ear,
Nor see, who gave us sight?

Shall not the world's high Judge chastise,
The Source of knowledge, know?
He knows the thoughts that men devise,
A vain and fleeting show.

How bless'd the man, in chast'nings bless'd,
Whom thou hast taught and tried!
In evil days, thou giv'st him rest,
Till guilt the grave shall hide.

For God will ne'er forsake his own,
Nor cast his saints away;
Till justice sit on judgment's throne,
While all the pure obey.

But when I cried, "my footsteps fail,"
Thy mercy made me strong;
And though a thousand griefs assail,
Thy comforts cheer my song.

Wilt thou th' unrighteous throne maintain,
That bids the lawless deed,
Against the good arrays its train,
And dooms the just to bleed?

The Lord our God, our Rock and Tow'r,
Shall all their crimes repay;
The Lord our God shall wield their pow'r,
The slayer's self to slay.

NOTES.—This is very probably a Psalm of the captivity.

Wilt thou th' unrighteous throne maintain? An oppressive nation of conquerors seems to be pointed out by this question; and this could be no other than the Chaldeans.

PSALM XCV.

O come, loud anthems let us sing,
To our salvation's Rock and King;
Within his gates with psalms rejoice,
And lift on high our thankful voice.

O come, and let our songs accord,
To bless our God, the only Lord;
For, high o'er ev'ry worshipp'd throne,
The Lord our God is Lord alone.

The earth's wide bounds are in his hand;
And by his strength the mountains stand;
He laid the sea's unfathom'd bed,
And far the shore's fair landscape spread.

Oh, come, and let us lowly fall,
And on our Maker kneeling call;
For he is still our God and Rock,
And we his people and his flock.

To-day, to-day, his voice but hear!
"Oh, close not fast your heart and ear,
As when of old your fathers' pride
So long my ling'ring wrath defied.

As on their desert march they mov'd,
My works they saw, mine arm they prov'd;
And forty years their guilt I bore,
Till that brief race was seen no more.

For thus I spake and sware in wrath,
'They will not choose my holy path;
Their heart from crime no more will cease,
They shall not tread my land of peace.'"

NOTES.—Some words of this Psalm are cited in the New Testament (Heb. iv. 7.) under the name of David. As the whole book, however, has so often been called the Psalms of David, we ought not,

perhaps, to urge this mode of speech as conclusive proof that the authorship of this particular Psalm belonged to him. In the Septuagint, all the Psalms between the ninety-second and the hundredth are expressly ascribed to David.

To-day, to-day his voice but hear! With this call the words of the Lord himself are introduced, reminding the people of the ancient sin and punishment of Israel.

PSALM XCVI.

Sing to the Lord a new-made lay,
Sing, all the earth, his sov'reign name;
Sing to the Lord, and, day by day,
The Lord's redeeming arm proclaim.

Tell all the world his wond'rous ways;
Tell ev'ry heathen land and ear;
Great is the Lord, and great his praise,
O'er all the gods that mortals fear.

The heathen gods are idols vain;
He made the heav'ns, and he supports:
And light and honour lead his train,
And strength and beauty fill his courts.

Give to the Lord, ye tribes and tongues,
Give to the Lord his praise and state;
Give to the Lord your heav'nliest songs,
And come with gifts, and throng his gate.

Oh, fear and bow in sacred grace,
And tell each land, that God is King:
He fix'd the world's unchanging base,
And he its righteous doom shall bring.

Let heav'n be glad, let earth rejoice,
The peopled ocean toss and roar,
The plenteous fields lift high their voice,
The wood's wild hymn in thunder soar.

So let them hail their sov'reign God;
For lo, he comes, he comes with might,
To wield the sceptre and the rod,
To judge the world with truth and right.

NOTES.—In the sixteenth chapter of the first Book of Chronicles, a Psalm is found, which was given by David to Asaph on the day on which the ark was brought up to Mount Sion. It is composed of the one hundred and fifth Psalm, the whole of the ninety-sixth, excepting the last verse, and of three additional verses, which belong to the one hundred and sixth, and one hundred and thirty-sixth. The present Psalm, therefore, was composed by David, either on that occasion, or before it.

The heathen gods are idols vain. It is impossible to give the verbal opposition of the original.

PSALM XCVII.

The Lord is King: with rapture loud
Earth and her isles his name shall own:
He dwells amidst the black'ning cloud,
And judgment lifts his awful throne:
A fiery stream before him flows,
And wastes afar his flying foes;
His lightning shafts, in vengeance hurl'd,
Blaze lurid o'er the trembling world.

The hills, like melting wax, dissolve,
Where'er his sov'reign presence burns;
The heav'ns proclaim his just resolve,
And ev'ry realm his glory learns:
Be shame on ev'ry idol boast,
Till bows in dust their worshipp'd host;
While Judah's daughters glad shall see,
While Sion sings, O Lord, to thee!

For far o'er ev'ry throne above,
Thy name, my God, in glory tow'rs:
From sin to flee is thee to love,
Who sav'st thy saints from hostile pow'rs:

Light on the righteous path is sown,
And joy around the pure has shone;
Then let their cheerful songs record
Thy sov'reign praise, O holy Lord!

NOTES.—This Psalm resembles the preceding; and was, perhaps, connected, in like manner, with the establishment of the ark, either in the tabernacle on Mount Sion, or in the temple.

He dwells amidst the black'ning cloud. All the most majestic and awful objects in nature are made the figures of the glory and judgments of God. These terrors, although they spread a deep awe over the pious mind, yet cannot restrain its rejoicing; for they are even exceeded by his love towards them that fear him. Thus the Psalmist blends them with his most joyful hymns.

Be shame on ev'ry idol boast. This verse is the celebrated chorus, which so incensed the emperor Julian, when a multitude of Christians assembled to remove the remains of the martyr Babylas from the grove of Daphne to Antioch. They sang psalms in choirs, as they passed; and united in this chorus, which reached the ears of the emperor himself. Several were afterwards imprisoned; and one young man, named Theodore, was brought to the rack; but he sang the same psalms amidst his torments.

From sin to flee is thee to love. For the sake of harmony with the usage of our own language, which does not allow those frequent changes of person that are so common in the Hebrew poetry, a greater uniformity in this respect has sometimes been retained in the translation than appears in the original. Perhaps the deviation is, in this verse, too considerable.

Light on the righteous path is sown. Lucretius says, L. ii. v. 211.

"Lumine conserit arva."

Sows with light the fields.

PSALM XCVIII.

Sing to the Lord a new-made song,
Who wond'rous things has done:
His holy arm and right hand strong
Have glorious conquest won.

The Lord has told his saving might,
By highest heav'n ador'd;
And on the heathen's dazzled sight
His righteous beams has pour'd.

He thinks on all his truth and grace
To Israel sworn of old;
And his salvation's glorious trace
Our utmost shores behold.

Oh, shout and sing, ye realms of earth,
And thankful praise prolong;
Oh, wake to God the harp's high mirth,
The harp and voice of song.

Pour out the clarion's silver swell,
The trumpet's stormy tone;
The world's triumphant joy to tell
Before its Sov'reign's throne.

And let the peopled sea rejoice,
The earth, and all its lands;
The mighty hills lift high their voice,
The waters clap their hands.

So let them join, their Lord to greet,
Who comes with holy might,
To sit on judgment's awful seat,
And judge the world in right.

NOTES.—"A Psalm." It exceedingly resembles the ninety-sixth; and, for that very reason it may be doubted whether it was written on the same occasion. This has more the appearance, also, of a song after victory. All these hymns of exultation seem to have their true force only when they are uttered by the voice of Christian praise.

The waters clap their hands. This was, among the Hebrews, as well as in modern nations, a sign of joy and applause. It was employed especially, it would seem, at the coronation of kings. (2 Kings xi. 12.) Hammond remarks that the striking and dashing of the waves resembles it.

PSALM XCIX.

The Lord is King, enthron'd on high,
Where radiant cherubs veil the brow:
Let nations quake beneath his eye,
Let earth's foundations trembling bow.

The Lord is great in Sion's tow'rs,
And fam'd above all royal fame;
Let all thy realms, with all their pow'rs,
Exalt and dread thy hallow'd name.

O mighty King, thy sov'reign sway
The righteous cause has lov'd and led:
A law of truth thy tribes obey,
And judgments just thy glory spread.

Exalt the Lord in praises loud,
And low at God's pure footstool fall;
So Moses sang, so Aaron bow'd,
So rose the voice of Samuel's call.

Prophets and priests, they call'd on thee,
And heard thee from thy cloud in heav'n;
For firm they kept thy good decree,
And lov'd the law thy love had giv'n.

Thou heard'st them, Lord, in pard'ning grace,
Though oft they drew thy chast'ning rod:
Exalt him in his lofty place,
For holy reigns the Lord our God!

NOTES.—This is also, very probably, one of the Psalms which were sung at the removal of the ark. The mention of Moses, Aaron and Samuel, might easily have led any poet later than David to add the name of David himself. But the Psalm is probably the work of that monarch, as well as of his age.

Where radiant cherubs veil the brow. The cherubim that spread their wings over the mercy-seat were emblematic of the hosts that do the divine commandments on high. When the Lord is said to sit between or above the cherubim, our eyes must pass from the earthly to the heavenly temple.

And heard thee from thy cloud in heav'n. The allusion is to the pillar of a cloud in which the Lord descended upon the temple, and spoke with Moses.

PSALM C.

Lift high as heav'n, ye lands of earth,
The strain that swells from countless throngs;
And serve the Lord with sacred mirth,
And seek his face with joy and songs.

For know, the Lord is God alone;
He made our souls, he rules our way;
We are not ours, but all his own,
The sheep that mid his pastures stray.

Oh, come, and mount, with glad acclaim,
Where fair his kingly portals rise;
And tread his courts, and waft his name
In praise beyond the answ'ring skies.

For God is love, and endless days
Beneath that love glide on in light;
And all his realms his truth shall praise,
While ages speed their downward flight.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of praise." It was undoubtedly sung in the house of the Lord. The paraphrase of this Psalm by Dr. Watts has been pronounced the loftiest specimen of devotional poetry in our language. In view of this, and of the excellence of Tate in this instance, I should have been tempted not to offer a version with which I am so little satisfied, were it not necessary for the completeness of the work.

Lift high as heav'n, ye lands of earth. How clearly and fully do such passages of the Psalms disclose the future calling of the Gentiles! All nations are summoned to the highest acts and privileges of worship, and all that separated them is forgotten in this delightful prospect.

The sheep that mid his pastures stray. "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." (John x. 16.)

PSALM CI.

Of grace and judgment I will sing;
I sing to thee, my Lord and King,
And seek thy way, securely wise:
Oh, when shall thy bright presence come,
To light my path, to cheer my home,
And on my upright breast arise?

No evil wile mine eye shall heed;
I hate the false transgressor's deed;
Its stain shall ne'er around me cleave:
The faithless tongue, the godless heart,
In shame and silence shall depart,
Nor my beleaguer'd ear deceive.

The sland'rer's lips my wrath shall seal,
That joy a brother's fame to steal;
The lofty brow and eye of pride
Before my presence ne'er shall stand,
But all the faithful of the land
Beneath my smile shall safe abide.

My gates shall open for the just;
Who trusts the Lord shall bear my trust;
And far shall cow'r the impious train;
Till, through my land, the guilty fall,
Nor God's fair city's holy wall
Shall echo to a step profane.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." It bears internal evidence of this authorship.

And on my upright breast arise? The Psalmist declares that he will walk before the Lord uprightly and with a perfect heart; and, in this determination, asks the divine presence and blessing. It must always be remembered that the king of Israel was the figure of him who should be our King, as well as our Prophet and Priest.

PSALM CII.

Oh, hear my pray'r, and let my cry
Go up before thee, Lord, on high;
Nor hide thy face in days of need,
But come in love, and come with speed.

My days, like mounting smoke-wreaths, pass;
My heart is parch'd, like wither'd grass;
A fire my fleshless bones devours,
And groans consume my fasting hours.

As pines the bird of marshes lone,
As makes the owl her desert moan,
As from the tow'r the sparrow cries,
So pours my soul its ceaseless sighs.

My foes' reproach each day I bear,
My banded foes destruction swear,
And ashes strew my lowly board,
And tears amidst my cup are pour'd.

Thy chast'ning wrath hath sent the blow,
Thou lift'st me high, thou lay'st me low;
My days, like sinking shadows, fly,
And, parch'd like with'ring grass, I lie.

But thou, O Lord, art still the same;
Age tells to age thine endless name;
And thou shalt yet for Sion rise,
And view her wastes with pitying eyes.

Now hastes the time, the time fulfill'd;
The Lord his city's walls shall build:
Thy servants watch her prostrate tow'rs,
And love the dust that hides her bow'rs.

Then, when her head his Sion rears,
And God's own glorious arm appears,

All kings of earth shall praise thy throne,
All realms shall fear thee, Lord, alone.

For God shall hear the humble pray'r,
And make the suff'rer's cause his care;
Till future times his praise record,
And unborn nations bless our Lord.

From his bright, holy place above
Looks o'er the earth the Lord of love,
And hears the captive's lonely sigh,
And saves the guiltless, doom'd to die.

So, Sion's mount his name shall tell,
So, Salem's tow'rs his praise shall swell,
When nations come in mingling throngs,
And pay the Lord their thousand songs.

He bow'd my strength amidst my way,
And hung with clouds my closing day:
"Oh, not," I cried, "so swift, so soon!
Remove me not, my God, at noon!

Thy years their course eternal keep,
While ages on to ages sweep;
Thy might the earth's foundations laid,
Thy hands the heav'n's bright arch array'd.

They all shall pass, but thou shalt stand;
They all shall fade beneath thine hand;
And, like a vesture's crumbling fold,
Shall earth and heav'n be wrapp'd and roll'd.

But thou nor change nor end canst know,
And while thy years eternal flow,
Thy servants' seed thy light shall see,
Their children's children dwell with thee."

NOTES.—"A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed with sorrow, and pours out his complaint before the Lord." This Psalm must have been written during the captivity; and is probably

to be understood rather of the whole people than of the individual writer.

My days, like mounting smoke-wreaths, pass. They glide away, as if without substance and without trace.

As pines the bird of marshes lone. The bird here mentioned is commonly supposed to be the pelican, which inhabits watery regions.

As from the tow'r the sparrow cries. An author on Natural History says of this bird; "It usually sits alone on the tops of old buildings and roofs of churches, singing very sweetly, especially in the morning; and is an oriental bird."

PSALM CIII.

Bless thou the Lord, my grateful heart,
My inmost bosom, bless his name:
Bless thou the Lord, my heav'nlier part,
And all his bounteous deeds proclaim.

The Lord forgives thy guilty stain,
And breaks thy fierce disease's sway,
Redeems thy life from ruin's chain,
And crowns with love thy peaceful day.

He feasts thy lips with blessings sweet,
And nerves thy frame to eagle youth;
He guides the guiltless victim's feet,
And shields the cause of fainting truth.

To Moses' eye he shew'd his path,
His deeds to Israel's chosen race:
How kind his love, how slow his wrath,
How rich the Lord's abounding grace!

He will not evermore upbraid,
Nor stretch his wrath to distant time;
He hath not all our sins repaid,
Nor giv'n the just reward of crime.

For look, how high the heav'n above
O'er earth and sea its arch extends;

So far the Lord's enfolding love
Around his shelter'd servants bends.

And look, how far from East to West
The circling sun his journey goes;
So far our Maker's gracious breast
Our sins' forgotten burden throws.

As melts a father's bosom mild,
So melts the Lord o'er them that pray:
He knows how frail his mortal child,
And pitying sees our frame of clay.

The days of man are like the grass,
A flow'r that rises, fair and green;
The winds along the meadows pass,
And where it bloom'd no more is seen.

But God's eternal love o'erspreads
The race that keep his cov'nant true;
And children's children on their heads
Receive his blessing's kindly dew.

He sends his righteous succour nigh,
And owns his faithful servants' call;
The Lord, whose throne is fix'd on high,
Whose broad dominion circles all.

Oh, bless the Lord, ye angels strong,
Who hear his voice, his word fulfil;
Oh, bless the Lord, ye glorious throng,
Who speed to bear his sov'reign will;

Oh, bless the Lord, ye hosts of light,
And far as e'er your chariots roll,
Let all his works adore his might;
Bless thou the Lord, my grateful soul!

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." It was the death-bed Psalm of Bishop Sanderson.

And nerves thy frame to eagle youth. The eagle, renewing his plumes, seems to put on a second youth; and this is the foundation of the comparison. So Isaiah (xl. 31.)

> "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength;
> They shall mount up with wings as eagles."

For look, how high the heav'n above. What more glorious, or what more soothing, picture of the divine character can be imagined, than that which in this and the two following verses, cheers the repentant sinner!

Oh, bless the Lord, ye hosts of light. The Hebrew poetry represents the superior orders of beings under the figure of innumerable armies attending in the majestic train of the King of kings.

PSALM CIV.

Oh, bless the Lord with all thy powers,
My mounting spirit, bless his name:
O Lord my God, how greatly tow'rs
Thy sov'reign throne in strength and fame!

A radiant robe of golden light
The Lord around his glory throws:
He spreads the heav'ns, his curtain bright;
His chambers on the deep repose.

He makes the clouds his awful car;
He rides upon the tempest's wing;
Like winds and lightnings, swift and far,
His mighty angels serve their King.

He fix'd the earth's foundations old,
That shall not change while ages flee;
And, like a garment's flowing fold,
He pour'd around the rolling sea.

High o'er the hills, without a shore,
Their mighty sheet the waters spread:
At thy rebuke, thy thunder's roar,
They hasted to their ocean bed.

Then mountains o'er the torrents frown'd,
And vales the gentle brooks supplied;
And ne'er again, beyond its bound,
Shall climb o'er earth the subject tide.

Beneath thy hand, the sparkling streams
Mid lonely hills their pathway burst:
There, shuns the herd the noonday beams,
And there the wild ass slakes his thirst.

Along the banks, in shaded nests,
The air's blithe songsters sit and sing:
Thy chambers lave the mountain crests,
Thy works refresh each living thing.

Thy grassy meads, thy golden soil,
To beast and man their stores impart;
The joyous wine, the glist'ning oil,
The bread that cheers the fainting heart.

The trees of God, with moisture fill'd,
The ancient cedars, upward tow'r;
There, tuneful bands their refuge build,
There makes the stork her shelter'd bow'r.

Where loftier rocks ascend the sky,
From crag to crag the wild goats leap;
And safe beyond the slayer's eye,
Their mountain hold the conies keep.

God gives the moon her time to shine,
And shews the sun his downward way;
And when the shades of eve decline,
He sends abroad the herds of prey.

Then, gliding from the tangled wood,
The lion's roaring offspring roam:
They seek from God their destin'd food,
Till morn's red dawn affrights them home.

The rising sun o'er nature glows;
In dens the fierce destroyers hide;
And man to cheerful labour goes,
And plies his toil till evening tide.

Oh, how thy varied works abound!
In wisdom, Lord, they all were made:
And earth, with thy rich treasures crown'd,
In living beauty stands array'd!

And lo, the broad and mighty sea,
Where, small and great, its myriads stray!
There cleave the ships their pathway free,
And there the wat'ry monsters play.

So wide thy works before thee stand,
And wait from thee their daily food:
They gather from thy bounteous hand,
And all that breathe are fill'd with good.

Thou hid'st thy face, they sink in death,
They vanish from the realms of day;
Thou stay'st the tide of vital breath,
And falls to dust the form of clay.

Thou send'st abroad thy spirit's might,
And nature feels the kindling birth:
A new creation springs to light,
And joy o'erspreads the smiling earth.

While ages run their endless race,
The Lord's high glory shall not fade:
And far as worlds his works may trace,
The Lord shall joy in all he made.

He looks on earth; beneath his sight
Earth's mighty bosom thrills and quakes;
His touch is on the mountain's height,
And forth the smoky volume breaks.

My soul and voice, while life shall beat,
Shall hymn the Lord in joyful lays:
My thought on God shall still be sweet,
And all my being shall be praise.

While men of guilt in death depart,
Nor earth shall bear their names abhorr'd,
Bless thou thy God, my grateful heart,
And ev'ry creature, bless the Lord!

NOTES.—It is impossible to fix the origin of this magnificent Psalm, which the Septuagint, however, ascribes to David.

His chambers on the deep repose. The chambers of the Orientals were placed in the upper part of the house, and were entered by a separate door. Their seclusion is the point of comparison in this place.

His mighty angels serve their King. Such is the inspired interpretation. (Heb. i. 7.) "He makes his angels spirits," says St. Jerome, "that they may inspire men with a desire to do his will."

High o'er the hills, without a shore. This was the chaotic state, which preceded the present formation of the earth. "Darkness was upon the face of the deep." (Gen. i. 2.)

The joyous wine, the glist'ning oil. So Pliny; "duo sunt liquores corporibus humanis gratissimi, intus vini, foris olei." (Hist. Nat. lxiv. 22.) "There are two fluids most grateful to the organization of man; wine within, and oil without."

Their mountain hold the conies keep. The creature here named is, says Mr. Green, "a large kind of mouse which lodges in rocky and mountainous places. It is a harmless creature which chews the cud, and is of the size of a rabbit, but of a browner colour, smaller eyes, and a head more pointed."

And lo, the broad and mighty sea. Lamartine imagines the Psalmist, when he thus sung, gazing from the heights of Lebanon, and catching a distant view of the flashing billows.

His touch is on the mountain's height. There may be an allusion to volcanoes.

PSALM CV.

Oh, thank the Lord, and call his name,
And tell the nations all his fame;
Sing, sing the psalm of rich delight,
And speak his deeds of wondrous might.

In God's great name, with heart and voice,
Let all that seek him still rejoice:
Oh, seek, while life prolongs the hour,
His sov'reign aid's redeeming pow'r.

Think on the wonders of his hand,
The mighty works of his command;
Let Abraham's seed his judgments trace,
Let Jacob's chosen tell his grace.

The Lord our God is Lord alone;
O'er all the earth his truth has shone:
He keeps his oath of old reveal'd,
His pledge to thousand ages seal'd;

To Abraham giv'n, to Isaac sworn,
In ceaseless faith by Israel borne;
"In Canaan's fields shalt thou be heir,
And make thy peaceful dwelling there."

Yet few were they, a feeble band,
And strangers in their promis'd land;
From tribe to tribe content to roam,
Each distant realm awhile their home.

But all their way he guarded round,
And check'd the wrath of monarchs crown'd;
"From mine anointed stay thine arm,
Nor do my holy prophets harm."

O'er all their fields a dearth he spoke;
The staff of strength'ning bread he broke;
But first a just deliv'rer gave,
The bondman Joseph, sold to save.

In chains he lay: his guiltless heart
Endur'd the iron's servile smart;
Till prov'd of God, his truth was known,
And justice spoke from Pharaoh's throne.

The lord of nations broke his chain;
The monarch gave him all his reign;
And chiefs were fetter'd at his will,
And sages listen'd, and were still.

Then Israel came, th' Egyptian's guest,
And Ham's fair plains were Jacob's rest:
God made his fruitful people strong
Beyond their tyrants' madd'ning throng.

His love enrag'd th' oppressor's heart;
They watch'd his tribes with murd'rous art:
Then Moses at his call arose,
Then Aaron, his pure priest, he chose.

Then Ham's dim land his wonders knew,
While darkness o'er their coasts he threw;
And when his word was still defied,
He roll'd in blood their peopled tide.

Teem'd all their land with slimy swarms,
Teem'd royal halls with loathsome forms:
He spake, and flies o'erspread their coasts,
And liv'd the dust in noisome hosts.

He gave them hail for dewy rains;
He swept with flame their fruitful plains;
The vine, the fig, his tempests tare,
And bow'd to earth their branches bare.

Th' unnumber'd worm and locust prey'd
Amidst their gardens' joyous shade;
And last, the sword of vengeance swept,
And Egypt o'er her firstborn wept.

With gold and silver, forth they came,
In all their tribes no feeble frame;
And glad th' Egyptian's fainting heart
Beheld their dreaded train depart.

God led their march: his cloud by day,
His fire by night, o'erhung the way:
They ask'd for bread; from heav'n it fell;
And deserts pour'd the rocky well.

Such wonders shone on mortal view;
So prov'd the Lord his promise true:
On Abraham, on his word, he thought,
And forth in joy his chosen brought.

He fix'd their home on Gentile soil;
They reap'd the fields of heathen toil:
Oh, taught so well to love his ways,
And keep his word, give God the praise!

NOTES.—The first part of this Psalm, as has been before remarked, is comprised in a Psalm given by David to Asaph, when the ark was brought to Mount Sion. That part consists of the first seven verses in this translation. It might be imagined that the rest was afterwards added; but the portion included in that Psalm has rather the aspect of an extract from some longer poem like this. St. Jerome well remarks of this and the following Psalm, that though they relate to the fathers, yet all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and were written for our instruction. "Omnia enim quæ contingebant antiquitus, in figura contingebant; ut nos erudiremur."

From mine anointed stay thine arm. The patriarchs are called the anointed and the prophets of God.

In all their tribes no feeble frame. None were prevented by disease or infirmity from following the host.

PSALM CVI.

Oh, bless the Lord: give God the praise,
Whose mercy reigns through endless days:
Oh, who his mighty acts can tell,
Or who his hymn can justly swell?

How bless'd are they, whose upright tread
From truth's fair path no snare has led!
O Lord, on me in mercy shine,
And be thy servants' portion mine.

Let thy salvation come to me,
That I thy chosen's bliss may see,
Amidst thy people's joy rejoice,
And lift with theirs my thankful voice.

But we have sinn'd: with dread accord
Our sires and we have scorn'd the Lord:
Our sires forgot his deeds of grace,
His wonders wrought on Egypt's race:

They trespass'd by the Red Sea's wave,
Yet there his arm was nigh to save;
He sav'd them for his own great name,
And spread afar his sov'reign fame.

He chid the sea, and open lay
Through billowy walls their guarded way;
And safe as on the desert's sand,
He bore them from th' oppressor's hand.

Dark o'er their foes the flood came down;
Not one was left, nor crest nor crown:
Then God's true word his tribes ador'd,
And high their song of triumph soar'd.

But ah, how soon, redeem'd from harm,
Their heart forgot the rescuing arm!
They ask'd no more his counsel true,
But hot desire to madness grew.

They cried for bread with rebel haste;
They murmur'd on their pathway waste:
God gave them all their lust would crave,
And lust's own plagues in vengeance gave.

In peaceful tents secure they lay,
And envied Moses' guardian sway,
And envied Aaron's saintly rod,
And dar'd the outstretch'd arm of God.

Earth op'd her mouth ; and Dathan died,
And sank Abiram's band of pride :
A fire along their armies flew,
And wasting flames th' ungodly slew.

At Horeb's base a calf they made ;
Around the molten mass they pray'd ;
And set in God's most glorious seat
The beast that grazes at our feet.

Forgot was he, their Saviour strong,
Who bore them from th' Egyptian's wrong,
In Ham's dark land his wonders show'd,
And through the sea spread wide their road.

Then spake the Lord his awful doom,
To sweep them to their common tomb ;
But in the breach his prophet stood,
And turn'd aside the wrathful flood.

They scorn'd his land of fair delight ;
They would not trust his promis'd might ;
Within their tents secure they lay,
And cast their God's true words away.

Then rear'd the Lord his hand, and sware
To waste their rebel armies there,
To strew them on the desert sands,
And drive their seed to distant lands.

They bow'd to Peor's imag'd lord,
And ate the idol's feasts abhorr'd ;
They dar'd in pride their Maker's stroke,
And forth the plague of judgment broke.

Then Phineas rose, the faithful priest,
And while he pray'd, the vengeance ceas'd :
Thrice honour'd name ! through endless days
That righteous deed shall waft his praise.

They strove beside the Fount of Strife,
And Moses gave his forfeit life;
For then their guilt his spirit stung,
Till rashly spoke his erring tongue.

They spar'd the race whom God would slay;
They trod the Pagan's impious way;
At idol shrines they made their pray'r,
And fell within the heathen's snare.

To Canaan's demon gods they bore
Their murder'd sons, their daughters' gore:
Blood, guiltless blood, their shores profan'd,
Their offspring's blood their garments stain'd.

Their works of guilt, their ways of guile,
Estrang'd the Lord's protecting smile:
Red o'er his tribes his wrath arose;
He loath'd the realm that once he chose.

He gave them to the heathen's rod;
Stern on their necks their foemen trod;
And fast th' oppressor's chain was riv'n,
So oft they sinn'd, so oft forgiv'n.

For still they chose their evil will,
And pride ensnar'd and crush'd them still:
But when he saw their contrite tears,
Then rose their cry to pitying ears.

Then all his cov'nant sworn return'd,
And all his ancient mercy burn'd;
And e'en within their foemen's heart
He bade the streams of pity start.

Still, Lord our God, from heathen lands
Redeem and lead our scatter'd bands,
Thy sov'reign name in songs to raise,
And triumph in thy holy praise.

Lord God of Israel, praise to thee,
As ever was, and e'er shall be:
Let all with glad amen accord,
And ev'ry people bless our Lord!

NOTES.—The character of this Psalm is precisely similar to that of the preceding. But the concluding verses lead us to the era of the captivity: it is probably, therefore, an imitation and continuation of the former, composed in a later age.

They bow'd to Peor's imag'd lord. "Baal-Peor" is "the lord of Peor."

They strove beside the Fount of Strife. The waters of Meribah received thus their name.

To Canaan's demon gods they bore. This corresponds with the version of the Septuagint.

With this Psalm the fourth Book closes; and the doxology in the last verse is viewed as the form of conclusion.

PSALM CVII.

Oh, bless the Lord of endless grace,
As endless as his days:
Let his redeem'd his mercies trace,
And sing his sov'reign praise.

He broke their tyrants' iron bands,
And led their armies forth,
From Eastern and from Western lands,
From South and utmost North.

They wander'd on a lonely waste;
No plenteous tow'rs were near;
No stream to soothe their parching taste,
Their fainting soul to cheer:

Then heard the Lord the pilgrims' cry,
And bore them from their woes,
Till bright before their weary eye,
Their home's fair walls arose.

Oh, might his love, on mortals shown,
By mortal songs be spread;
Who stills the thirsty suff'rer's moan,
And fills the poor with bread!

E'en so, where midnight darkness reigns,
And death's still deep'ning shade,
Fast bound in sorrows and in chains,
Their sinking forms they laid.

For from the Lord's commandment just
They turn'd with scorn and shame;
Therefore he bow'd them to the dust,
And no deliv'rer came.

Then heard the Lord the captives' cry,
And bore them from their woes,
And bade the midnight darkness fly,
And death its bonds unclose.

Oh, might his love, on mortals shown,
By mortal songs be spread;
Who broke the brazen portals down,
The bars of iron shred!

So, burning plagues in judgment pour'd
The fools of guilt appal:
Their soul abhors the festal board;
At death's dark gate they fall:

Then hears the Lord the suff'rers' cry,
And bears them from their woes;
He sends his word of healing nigh,
And balm and comfort flows.

Oh, might his love, on mortals shown,
By mortal songs be spread;
And grateful gifts his wonders own,
And shouts of joyous dread!

They that go down upon the deep
Before the fickle breeze,
And there their vent'rous business keep
Upon the mighty seas;

They know the Lord's tremendous hand,
And see his ocean deeds,
When, rising grim at his command,
The thund'ring tempest speeds.

They mount upon the crested wave,
That seems to scale the clouds;
Then, deep beneath, the billowy grave
Their trembling bark enshrouds.

Cold fears o'er all their members steal,
Their melting pow'rs decline,
While on the reeling deck they reel,
Like men o'ercome with wine.

Then hears the Lord the voy'gers' cry,
And bears them from their woes;
Till o'er the gentle waves they spy
Their haven's wish'd repose.

Oh, might his love, on mortals shown,
By mortal songs be spread,
Where pray'rs of myriads seek his throne,
By hoary wisdom led!

He makes the floods a dreary sand,
The streams a desert bare,
And wastes with drought a fruitful land,
When guilt has sojourn'd there.

He makes the sands a lovely lake,
The waste, o'erflowing springs;
And there, his plenteous home to take,
The famish'd exile brings.

They build, they sow, they plant in peace
The vineyard's wealthy ground:
Their households in his smile increase,
Their stately herds abound.

Again, with woe, defeat and need,
Their scatter'd bands decay;
And, cloth'd with scorn, a royal seed
Through pathless deserts stray;

While high above a thousand ills
He lifts the righteous poor;
And like the flocks on many hills,
Their households spread secure.

The just rejoice; and, guilt must gaze,
And ope her lips no more:
Whoe'er is wise shall mark his ways,
And God's dear love adore.

NOTES.—From the mention of political revolutions, in this Psalm, and especially of exile and the return of the exiles, it is highly probable that it was composed soon after the captivity. Five classes of persons are described in their several dangers; wanderers from their home, prisoners, sufferers from disease, mariners tossed with tempests, and the citizens of a conquered and desolated land. Each of the first four classes is painted as calling upon God from the midst of their perils; and his interposition is related in similar language. A chorus, varied a little in each instance, follows each picture. The whole has an appropriate introduction and conclusion.

They mount upon the crested wave. A description of a tempest by Ovid (Tristia, Lib. i. Eleg. 2.) is very similar.

"Me miserum, quanti montes volvuntur aquarum!
Jamjam tacturos sidera summa putes.
Quantæ diducto subsidunt æquore valles!
Jamjam jacturas tartara nigra putes.
Rector in incerto est, nec quid fugiatve petatve
Invenit, ambiguis ars stupet ipsa malis."

Ah me, what billowy mountains roll on high!
Now seem they e'en to reach the starry steep:
What billowy vales beneath subsiding lie!
Now seem they e'en to heave th' infernal deep.
Nor aid nor flight th' uncertain pilot knows:
Skill stands bewilder'd with the strife of woes.

By hoary wisdom led. The presence of the elders, in public places and worship, indicates the solemnity of the occasion.

PSALM CVIII.

My heart is turn'd, O God my King,
My glory wakes, to shout and sing:
Awake, my lute; awake, my lyre;
I wake with morning's eastern fire.

Amidst the realms I praise my Lord,
Amidst the nations' glad accord:
Thy mercy highest heav'n transcends,
Thy truth beyond the clouds extends.

Be thou, O God, exalted high
In thy bright realms above the sky;
Let earth thy love and glory see;
And stretch thy saving arm to me.

And hark, the Lord lifts high his voice,
And in his word my ears rejoice:
I haste, old Shechem's tow'rs to scale,
And spread my line o'er Succoth's vale.

And mine are Gilead's fruitful hills,
And mine the fields Manasseh tills;
My helmet's strength are Ephraim's bands;
My sceptre rests in Judah's hands.

In Moab's streams my feet I lave,
And cast my shoe to Edom's slave;
And o'er Philistia swell on high
A conqu'ring lord's rejoicing cry.

But who shall lead our scatter'd pow'rs,
And bring to Edom's battled tow'rs?
And hast thou cast us, Lord, away,
And lead'st no more our weak array?

Oh, give us aid from trouble's chain,
For man's poor aid is false and vain:

We march with God's victorious might,
And he shall tread our foes in flight.

NOTES.—"A Song and Psalm of David." The first two stanzas, and a part of the third, are, with a trifling variation, taken from the fifty-seventh Psalm, and the remainder from the sixtieth. Perhaps the cause of this compilation was in some manner connected with the use of the Psalms in the public worship of the Jews.

Let earth thy love and glory see. Here is the transition from the former to the latter Psalm. It is observable that the few slight changes appear to give to the present Psalm a little more the aspect of confidence and triumph, than appears in the Psalms from which it is compiled.

PSALM CIX.

God of my praise, oh, be not silent now:
False, guilty lips my swift destruction vow,
Against my fame their faithless tale resound,
And hem my path with words of hatred round.

In causeless war they spread the murd'rous snare,
By many a curse give back a brother's pray'r,
With ill on ill my purpose kind repel,
And hate the heart that lov'd them once so well.

Place thou a tyrant o'er his falling race;
At his right hand a fierce accuser place;
Condemn his cause in judgment's awful time,
And let his pray'r but swell his load of crime.

Few be his days, and soon his sentence seal'd,
And let another's hand his office wield;
Let his lorn spouse forsake his desert home,
And far for bread his helpless children roam.

Let strangers spoil his wealth, and none so dear
To give his children's woes a kindly tear:
Destroy their name from each familiar spot,
And let a few fleet years their hist'ry blot.

Still let his father's sins before thee lie,
Still on his mother's guilt be fix'd thine eye;
Nor let their tale of crime thy mem'ry shun,
Till all their name be quench'd beneath the sun.

For in his prosp'rous pride he would not heed
Sweet mercy's voice, nor love's benignant deed;
But tow'rds the poor and wretched aim'd his stroke,
And crush'd to earth the hearts which thou hadst broke.

He lov'd the curse; on him the curse shall be:
He chose not blessing; blessing far shall flee:
As round him cursing like a cloak he drew,
So let it pierce his heart and members through.

Within, like searching oil or waters cold,
Without, a mantle's all-embracing fold,
A constant girdle girded to their breast,
The Lord's dread curse with mine accusers rest.

O Lord my God, in thy dear love be near;
With thy great name to save my cause appear:
Wretched, and poor, and ready to depart,
Before thy throne I bow my broken heart.

Brief as the evening shadow on the plain,
Chas'd, like the locust from the rip'ning grain,
With fainting knees and failing flesh I tread,
And foes look on, and shake the scornful head.

Save me, O Lord my God, in mercy save,
And let them see what arm salvation gave,
And in thy deeds the sov'reign Lord confess:
So, let them curse me, Lord, if thou but bless.

Oh, when they rise, bring down their pride to dust,
And let thy servant glory in his trust;
And let their tow'ring heads with shame be crown'd,
And shame, for robes of beauty, wrap them round.

My mouth shall praise the Lord with lofty songs,
My lips shall praise him mid adoring throngs;
For on the poor's right hand in might he stands,
And guards the victim, doom'd by impious bands.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David. It is ascribed to David also in the New Testament, (Acts i. 16.) where some of its words are cited as prophetic or descriptive of the doom of Judas. The ancients called it the Iscariotic Psalm; and St Augustin remarks upon it that Judas was a kind of representative of the Jewish enemies of Christ; "personam quodam modo sustinet inimicorum Christi Judæorum." *Enar. in Psalmos.* This is, indeed, the application which we should give to these dreadful denunciations, regarding them as expressive of the fate of those who oppose, with obstinate hatred, the cause and mercies of God. "I see no inconvenience," says Mr. Merrick, "in supposing an inspired writer, at the same time that he foretells the punishments which God has absolutely determined to inflict on any particular persons, to have been directed to express his own desire (a desire which it was his duty to entertain) that the measures which God sees necessary to the support of his laws may be accomplished."

Condemn his cause in judgment's awful time. This may, however, be spoken of human judgment.

And let his pray'r but swell his load of crime. A more appalling curse can hardly be imagined. It can, of course, be understood only of the prayer of the hypocrite.

And let another's hand his office wield. Thus, it is translated by the Septuagint, ἐπισκοπην, which accordingly is rendered, in the English translation of the Acts, by "bishopric."

Chas'd, like the locust from the rip'ning grain. I have supposed this passage to refer to the means employed by men to drive the locusts away from their fields. But Dr. Shaw, speaking of the swarms of locusts which he saw near Algiers in 1724 and 1725, says, "when the wind blew briskly, so that these swarms were crowded by others, we had a lively idea of that comparison of the Psalmist (Ps. cix. 23.) of being *tossed up and down as the locust.*"

PSALM CX.

The Lord spake to my Lord,
"Have thou
Thy royal seat
On my right hand, till I shall bow
Thy foes beneath thy feet."

God shall thy rod of strength
Extend
From Sion's hill;
And hostile realms afar shall bend,
And do thy sov'reign will.

Then, when the dawn shall gild
Thine arms
Of conqu'ring pow'r,
Thine own shall throng, in holy charms,
To hail the radiant hour.

More num'rous and more bright
Shall earth
Thine offspring yield,
Than lies the morning's dewy birth
On sparkling wood and field.

The Lord, who cannot change,
Hath sworn,
"To thee remain,
As by Melchizedek were borne,
Priesthood and kingly reign."

The Lord on thy right hand,
Shall tread
In his just wrath,
On many a monarch's impious head,
Along his victor path.

O'er heaps of slain he goes,
But first
Bows lowly down,
At the poor riv'let slakes his thirst,
Then rises to his crown.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." Our Saviour expressly speaks of David as its author, (Matt. xxii. 44. Mark xii. 36. Luke xx. 42.) and it is repeatedly cited by him and his apostles as prophetic of the exaltation of the Messiah. (Acts ii. 34. Heb. vi. 20.) It could hardly have had any secondary application.

On my right hand. It is well known that the right hand or right side of a monarch was the station next in dignity to his own. Even companionship in empire was denoted by such a seat upon the throne itself.

God shall thy rod of strength. The prophet here speaks, and declares that the sceptre given by God to his Son should be extended from Sion, or the church, and that its signal should be obeyed throughout the world.

Thine own shall throng, in holy charms. Thus the vast and holy increase of the church of Christ is represented, under the figure of a nation gladly welcoming its prince, in the morning of his reign.

Than lies the morning's dewy birth. The interpretation of this very elliptical passage by Bishop Lowth is now generally adopted.

"Præ utero Auroræ tibi ros prolis tuæ."

"More numerous than the dew which proceeds from the womb of the morning, shall be the dew of thy offspring." The sands of the sea do not more strikingly express an innumerable multitude, than the dew-drops; and these, at the same time, present a cheerful and joyous image.

As by Melchizedek were borne. This union of the priestly and regal offices was the peculiar characteristic of the Messiah, of whom Melchizedek was so signal a type.

O'er heaps of slain he goes. The same triumph is here attributed, with little distinction, to Christ himself, and to the Lord, who is ever at his right hand as his Defender. This verse can only be spoken of the Saviour. The figure is that of a warrior, pausing to refresh himself at a brook, from the toils of battle. But the stream which is figured is the dark stream of death, which our Lord tasted before his final triumph, and which was even a relief to him after his strong conflict.

PSALM CXI.

PRAISE YE THE LORD!

All my poor pow'rs, and all my heart,
In his dear praise shall bear their part;
Bear well their part where saints retreat,
And well where thronging thousands meet.

Creation wears his glorious name,
And wondrous deeds his might proclaim:
Delightful search of faithful love,
To mark that sov'reign hand above!

Excelling far our praises' pow'r,
His works in strength and glory tow'r;
Firm, while the ages speed their way,
His justice holds its endless way.

Good is the Lord: his deeds of grace
Shall sweet remembrance joy to trace:
He bends on man a pitying eye,
And loves to cast his vengeance by.

In famine's hour of wild complaints,
With plenteous bread he cheer'd his saints:
Kind was his cov'nant thus of old,
And still its changeless truth is told.

Led on their march by heav'nly light,
His people saw his works of might:
Mid heathen homes, their vict'ry's spoil,
He gave them rest from years of toil.

No deed unjust his throne profanes,
No promise false his glory stains;
On truth's firm rock, on judgment sure,
His wise commandments shall endure.

Pillars of earth, their laws abide,
Amidst the ages' dashing tide,
Rest on their pure, eternal base,
And rise and tow'r in holy grace.

Salvation to his own he gave,
A ransom for the fetter'd slave;
Then fix'd his cov'nant's sacred frame:
How bless'd, how holy is his name!

Upward the path of knowledge tends,
But first from God's true fear ascends:
Well are they wise who seek his ways,
And endless is his glorious praise.

NOTES.—This is the fourth of the alphabetic Psalms. Its general tone reminds us of the later ages of the Jewish church.

Praise ye the Lord! This is the Hallelujah of the Hebrews; with which ten of the Psalms commence, and five are concluded. Bishop Sanderson says that the whole book of Psalms has been abridged into two words, Hosanna and Hallelujah; or, supplication and praise.

But first from God's true fear ascends. So the Book of Ecclesiastes, (xii. 13.)

> "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter,
> Fear God, and keep his commandments."

PSALM CXII.

PRAISE YE THE LORD!

All blessings rest, in rich reward,
On his pure head, who loves the Lord,
Bears on his breast a righteous fear,
And deems the law his joy most dear.

Children of children yet shall grace,
Through distant years, his rising race:
Death bears him to his silent rest,
But still his upright seed are bless'd.

Earth's utmost wealth shall deck his hearth,
And wealth that mocks the wealth of earth:
For his just lot is giv'n on high,
And lasts beyond the changing sky.

Glad beams, like morn, his path shall crown,
When midnight's shades come darkest down:
His bounteous hands, his pitying heart,
Shall find from mercy mercy's part.

In days of need the just befriends,
And gladly gives, and largely lends:
Kind thoughts the upright bosom bears,
And wisdom lightens all its cares.

Like billows on the changeless rock,
On him shall troubles pour their shock:
Memorials bless'd his name shall hold,
And bosoms dear his form enfold.

No tidings dread shall daunt his ear;
He trusts the Lord, and cannot fear:
On God's strong love his breast reclines,
And peace within, and glory shines.

Pure rests he thus in God's repose,
And shall not shrink, mid stormy foes;
Rests, till his eye its wish shall see,
And all his stormy foes shall flee.

Strewn far and wide, to cheer the poor,
His righteous wealth shall still endure;
Till high his honour'd head shall rise,
When earth's dim glory fades and dies.

Vainly the sinner, bound beneath,
Shall gaze from far, and gnash his teeth;
While all his impious dreams decay,
And hope and pride melt all away.

NOTES.—This is the fifth of the alphabetic Psalms. Its author is unknown, and its purport is general.

Earth's utmost wealth shall deck his hearth. The promises of the old covenant unfolded temporal blessings and rewards, more distinctly, and the eternal, more dimly. In the new covenant, the latter almost entirely fill up the view; but the former are not withheld.

PSALM CXIII.

PRAISE THE LORD!

Praise him with a loud accord,
Praise him, servants of the Lord!
Praise him with an endless fame:
Bless'd forever be his name!

Bless'd, while yet the golden sun
Days and years his course shall run;
From the Eastern dawning bless'd,
To the chambers of the West!

Far above the earth and sky,
Reigns the glorious Lord on high:
Who so high shall make abode?
Who is like the Lord our God?

Yet he bows to see in love
Earth below and heav'n above;
Lifting sorrow from the dust,
Lifting high the humbled just.

Such he bids with princes stand,
With the princes of their land;
Bids the barren mother's hearth
Ring with childhood's song of mirth.
Praise the Lord!

NOTES.—This Psalm and the five following compose what is called "the great Hallel;" that is, the song of praise, which was sung at festivals, especially at the passover. The first two of the six were sung before the paschal meal itself; the last four, after it.

Ring with childhood's song of mirth. This apparently abrupt conclusion is, notwithstanding, very lyrical and beautiful. The blessing of children was, indeed, regarded by the Hebrews as amongst the highest of temporal favours, and might well close the recital of the divine mercies.

PSALM CXIV.

When forth from Egypt's trembling strand
The tribes of Israel sped,
And Jacob in the stranger's land
Departing banners spread;

Then One, amidst their thick array,
His kingly dwelling made,

And all along the desert way
Their guiding sceptre sway'd.

The sea beheld, and smit with dread,
Roll'd all its billows back;
And Jordan, through his deepest bed,
Reveal'd their destin'd track.

Like startled leaders of the flock,
The ancient mountains reel'd,
And shook the hills their crests of rock,
Like lambs that sport afield.

What ail'd thee, O thou mighty sea,
And roll'd thy waves in dread?
What bade thy tide, O Jordan, flee,
And bare its deepest bed?

Why reel'd the mountains with dismay,
Like leaders of the flock?
Why shook the hills, like lambs at play,
Their ancient crests of rock?

O earth, before the Lord, the God
Of Jacob, tremble still;
Who makes the waste a water'd sod,
The flint a gushing rill.

NOTES.—It is probable that this Psalm was composed expressly for the Passover.

Then One, amidst their thick array. The absence of the divine name at this part of the original Psalm gives strength to the whole, by throwing an air of mystery over the cause of these miraculous events. In the Hebrew, neither the noun nor the pronoun need be expressed; and in the translation no better way of preserving this feature of the Psalm has occurred, than this use of the indefinite designation.

The ancient mountains reel'd. Sinai and Horeb may be particularly the subjects of this allusion.

O earth, before the Lord, the God. This indirect answer is peculiarly grand: and the whole Psalm must be regarded as one of the noblest specimens of the Hebrew poetry.

PSALM CXV.

Not unto us, O Lord of hosts,
Not unto us, be praise:
But in thy name we make our boasts,
And tell thy truth through all our coasts,
And thy memorial raise.

Why should the impious heathen cry,
"Where hides their God and Lord?"
Our God is in the heav'ns on high,
And all that live in earth and sky
Fulfil his will and word.

Their idol gods are gods of gold;
Or silver, fashion'd fair:
From human hands they took their mould;
Man gave them silent lips and cold,
That mock their vot'ry's pray'r;

Man gave them eyes that naught can view,
And ears, that naught can hear;
And hands that no kind deed can do,
And feet that ne'er a foe pursue,
Or flee a danger near;

Man gave a nose that naught can smell,
A mouth that naught can say:
And those who loud their praises tell,
And trust the gods they fram'd so well,
Are senseless, e'en as they.

O Israel, trust the Lord your Shield,
O house of Aaron just;
Still trust the strength his arm shall yield,
And trust the buckler he shall wield;
O all that fear him, trust!

The Lord our path shall onward trace,
And give our hands success;
Shall bless the men of Israel's race,
Shall bless the heirs of Aaron's grace,
Shall all that fear him bless.

Yea, he shall bless, and shall not cease,
The high and humble all:
On you and yours, with large increase,
Shall blessings, giv'n in love and peace,
From heav'n's high Monarch fall.

He made the heav'n's resplendent height;
He gave the earth its span:
In heav'n he fix'd his dwelling bright,
Beyond yon arch of golden light,
And earth he gave to man.

Not from the graves' descending gate
Shall songs thy praise record:
But still on thee our hymns shall wait,
While thou shalt stretch our being's date:
Oh, praise the sov'reign Lord!

NOTES—This Psalm was probably composed at some late period of the Jewish history. In the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and some manuscripts, it is connected with the preceding as a part of the same Psalm; but the diversity of the two, and the completeness of each, forbid such an arrangement.

The heathen gods are gods of gold. The strain of derision in which the prophets sometimes expose the folly of idolatry, displays most strikingly the immense superiority of the privileges of the Jews, and of all who knew the one true God, over the wisest of heathen nations. Degrading as was worship like this, yet human nature, almost universally, invented or adopted it: nor can we doubt that the mass of idolaters have actually ascribed to the image itself the powers of Deity.

PSALM CXVI.

I love the Lord of love,
  Because he deign'd to hear,
And from his holy seat above
  Bow'd e'en to me his ear.

Therefore, through all my days,
  My voice shall mount on high,
For mercies past shall pour its praise,
  For future mercies cry.

The snares of death were round,
  The terrors of the grave;
The anguish of strong fear I found,
  And none was there to save.

Then to the Lord arose
  My voice of trusting pray'r:
"Lord, from the midst of thronging woes
  My rescued spirit bear."

Kind is the Lord, and just;
  The Lord our God is good:
My sorrow bow'd me to the dust,
  But near my Saviour stood.

Return, then, O my soul,
  To thy delightful rest;
For well the Lord's most kind control
  Has all thy progress bless'd.

For thou, O God, hast kept
  My spirit from the dead:
No bitter tear mine eye has wept,
  Nor miss'd my foot its tread.

So, in the living's land
  I walk before the Lord,

And as I trusted in his hand,
I tell that trust's reward.

For when, in flight and pain,
Exclaim'd my heart dismay'd,
"All mortal men are false and vain,"
Then dawn'd immortal aid.

What off'ring shall I bring,
What grateful tribute raise,
To tell the goodness of my King,
That guided all my ways?

I take the chalice deep,
And call my Saviour's name;
My vows amidst his people keep,
And all his love proclaim.

Oh, precious in his eye
His saints' expiring breath:
And dear, too dear for earth to buy,
The purchase of their death.

O Lord, from bondage freed,
Thy servant, low I bow;
Thy servant, and thy handmaid's seed,
And thine by ransom now.

I bring my thankful lay,
And call my Saviour's name,
My vows amidst his people pay,
And all his love proclaim;

Within the gates that gem
His temple's holy place;
Within thy midst, Jerusalem!
Praise ye the Lord of grace!

NOTES.—This is a Psalm of thanksgiving for individual blessings; and David was very probably its author. It is twice cited in the New Testament. The Septuagint divides it into two Psalms; but obviously without reason.

Kind is the Lord, and just. This and the following verse were "the Cygnean Cantion" of the excellent Doctor Thomas Jackson; with which he surrendered up his spirit.

I take the chalice deep. After a sacrifice of thank-offering, a cup would of course be drunk at the festal meal which followed; and this is a beautiful figure to express the gratitude of the heart.

I bring my thankful lay. The correspondence between this verse and that cited in the preceding note, will not pass unobserved.

PSALM CXVII.

Oh, praise the Lord, ye lands of earth,
And sing, ye tribes of mortal birth;
Where'er the step of man is found,
Where'er a voice can lift the sound.

For o'er us, on us, is his love;
It reigns below, it dwells above:
And endless ages shall record
His endless truth; oh, praise the Lord!

NOTES.—This brief Psalm is little more than a chorus in connexion with others. Rosenmueller conjectures that it was sung, either at the commencement of the sacred exercises, or, like our doxologies, at the close.

Oh, praise the Lord, ye lands of earth. In the Epistle to the Romans (xv. 11.) this verse is cited, with other passages, as a confirmation of the call of the Gentiles.

PSALM CXVIII.

Oh, praise the Lord, whose bounteous sky
Of love is ne'er o'ercast:
Let Israel say of God most High,
His love is firm and fast:

Let Aaron's house adoring cry,
His love shall ne'er be past:
Let all that fear the Lord reply,
His love shall always last.

From the dark portals of despair,
I call'd, O Lord, on thee:
The Lord vouchsaf'd to hear my pray'r,
And made my footstep free.

The Lord is mine; and mortal bands
Shall ne'er my soul appal:
The Lord with my defenders stands,
I see my foemen fall.

Far better to the Lord to cling,
Than lean on mortal dust:
Far better own the Lord our King,
Than kingly crowns to trust.

Around my ambush'd path they came,
All nations in their might;
But in the Lord's triumphant name
I drove them in the fight.

On ev'ry side their armies came,
They rush'd on ev'ry side;
But in the Lord's triumphant name
I trod their armies wide.

Like countless bees, in swarms they came,
Like blazing thorns they pass'd;
For in the Lord's triumphant name
I swept them to the blast.

Sore, fierce and deadly was thy stroke,
O thou vindictive arm!
But God's strong shield its fury broke,
And turn'd th' impending harm.

The Lord, the Saviour of my trust,
Is still my strength and song:
And still the dwellings of the just
The voice of joy prolong.

The Lord's right hand does wondrous deeds;
The Lord's right hand is high;
The Lord's right hand the vict'ry speeds;
I am not doom'd to die.

I live, to speak the might of God,
While he upholds my breath:
He sent on me the chast'ning rod,
But not the sword of death.

Ope wide the gates, the holy gates,
Where deigns the Lord to dwell;
That, where the just assembly waits,
My lips his praise may tell.

I praise the Lord, who heard my voice,
And my deliv'rance sped:
The stone that won no builder's choice
Is now the corner's head.

This is the work the Lord hath done;
With wond'ring joy we gaze:
This is the Lord's own morning sun;
We triumph in its blaze.

Oh, hear us, Lord, and save us still;
Oh, hear us, Lord, and bless;
While on his head who speaks thy will
We ask thy rich success.

Forth from the Lord's own temple walls
We lift the glad acclaim;
"Bless'd be his work, who comes and calls
In God's most holy name!"

The Lord is God: as radiant morn,
On us his light hath shin'd:
Then, fast around the altar's horn,
The spotless victim bind.

Thou art my God; thou art my King:
My thanks shall ne'er be past:
Oh, come, the Lord's high mercies sing,
Whose love shall always last.

NOTES.—This Psalm is commonly ascribed to David; although it is several times quoted in the New Testament, (Matt. xxi. 42. Mark xii. 10. Luke xx. 17. Acts iv. 11. Heb. xiii. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7.) without his name. It was probably sung on some public occasion of triumph and festivity. But it was certainly interpreted of the Messiah by the ancient Jews, as well as since by the whole Christian Church; and our Saviour applied it to himself.

His love is firm and fast. The passages which have a verbal correspondence with one another have been, as far as might be, preserved in the same form.

Like blazing thorns they pass'd. Although the thorns blaze up at once, with a loud noise, yet the flame soon dies, and hardly leaves a trace. This is the point of comparison.

The stone that won no builder's choice. Of whom could this be so truly spoken as of the crucified and risen Saviour?

Bless'd be his work, who comes and calls. With this cry the people welcomed our Lord, when he entered Jerusalem to die. They borrowed it from this Psalm.

Then, fast around the altar's horn. The victim should be offered as a thank-offering. It was to be bound with cords for the sacrifice, but whether to the horns of the altar, or only near them, may be doubted. The horns were a kind of spires, covered with brass, and rising from each corner of the altar. Lightfoot says that their tops were seven cubits from the earth.

PSALM CXIX.

Along the pure and perfect way,
How bless'd are they who tread;
Whose guarded feet can never stray,
By God's commandments led!

All blessings crown the stedfast heart,
That seeks the living Lord,
From his dear paths will ne'er depart,
Nor touch the deed abhorr'd.

As thou our souls hast charg'd and bound
Thy precepts to fulfil,
So, would that all my ways were found
Where points thy holy will!

Asham'd no more, its upright praise
My soul shall lift to thee,
When all thy laws, in all my ways,
My guiding word shall be.

An holy joy my breast shall swell,
When none is e'er forgot:
I love thy bless'd commandments well;
O Lord, forsake me not!

By what strong aid shall e'er a youth
Preserve his footsteps pure?
By following still thy word of truth
With stedfast eye and sure.

But one chief wish my bosom feels,
From thee to stray no more:
But one rich gain my heart conceals,
Thy word's protecting store.

Bless'd be thy name, O Lord my God!
To me thy laws unfold:
And loud my lips shall tell abroad
Whate'er thy lips have told.

Beyond the wealth of golden mines,
Thy precepts are my joy:
The way where thy commandment shines
Shall all my cares employ.

Bright beams are there, with gladness bright,
And heav'nly raptures flow:
I will not lose the rich delight
Which thy pure words bestow.

CHEER thou thy servant's toil, O Lord,
And bless'd requital give;
That, strengthen'd by thy large reward,
My heart may hear and live.

Chase thou mine eyes' dark mist away;
Thy wond'rous depths unfold;
Nor, while a stranger here I stray,
Thy guiding laws withhold.

Constant as life's uncheck'd decline,
To thy dear word I flee;
And still my thirsty heart must pine,
With longing, Lord, for thee.

Curs'd is the bold transgressor's path,
But I thy laws have kept:
Oh, turn from me the shame and wrath
That o'er the proud have swept.

Chiefs in their seat against me spake,
But still thy servant's mind
For wiser guides thy laws shall take,
And there its rapture find.

DOWN to the dust my spirit cleaves;
Oh, let thy spirit move:
And as my heart thy truth believes,
So now that truth approve.

Declaring all thy precepts' praise,
Thou heard'st my faithful song:
Oh, teach me more thy works and ways,
And still my strain prolong.

Drooping and faint, my spirit sinks;
Oh, let thy spirit move;
As on thy truth thy servant thinks,
So now that truth approve.

Draw, draw me from the path of lies,
And give thy law of grace:
There, there shall rest my joyful eyes,
And love thy steps to trace.

Delighted to thy word I cling;
Oh, let not shame be mine;
But spread my spirit's chainless wing,
To mount thy paths divine.

Enlighten, Lord, mine eyes to learn,
That I may ne'er depart,
But keep the precepts I discern,
And keep with all my heart.

Establish there my cheerful choice,
Where all thy truth is told;
And let me more in thee rejoice,
Than e'er in hoards of gold.

Engage mine eyes, no more to stray,
By snares of folly led;
And quicken on thy righteous way
My firm and cheerful tread.

E'en as thy fear thy servant owns,
So let thy truth be clear;
And turn the scorner's mocking tones
That pour a baser fear.

Esteeming all thy judgments just,
Lo, how for each I long!
Oh, warm with life this sinful dust,
And make my virtue strong.

Free let thy bounteous mercy, Lord,
To me its treasures ope;
Free, the salvation of thy word,
Rewarding all my hope.

Fill thou my lips with answers bold,
When scorners would dismay:
My stedfast heart thy truth shall hold;
Take not that truth away.

For on thy laws, that cannot change,
Forever hangs my fear;
And free and far my step may range,
Beneath thy precepts clear.

Fearless and not asham'd I stand,
Where monarchs hold their seat;
And witness to thy dread command,
And speak thy mercies sweet.

Folding thy law within my arms,
I rise in thought above;
And, musing on its sacred charms,
My heart o'erflows with love.

Give, Lord, thy servant's fainting breast
In thy remembrance place;
As thou hast made my hope to rest
On thine own word of grace.

Glad comfort thence my soul sustains,
Though dark'ning woes be near;
And life and joy run through my veins,
When once thy voice I hear.

Great was the scorn of mockers bold,
But ne'er from thee I turn'd;
I thought on all thy deeds of old,
And heav'nly solace learn'd.

Grief burns my heart for them that roam
To paths of fearful wrong:
But here, amidst my pilgrim home,
Thy precepts are my song.

Good thoughts of these, in silent night,
Have hover'd where I slept;
And this was still my sure delight,
That I thy cov'nant kept.

Hope of my soul, her endless part,
O Lord my God, art thou!
Before thy throne, with prostrate heart,
I make my pray'r and vow.

Have mercy, as thy word is true,
For still, thy ways to tread,
With vig'rous step and eager view,
My cheerful soul has sped.

Hot was the rage of murd'rous bands
That round my footsteps hung;
But still to thy most just commands
My stedfast mem'ry clung.

High from my midnight couch shall soar
The solemn voice of praise;
And sleep shall flee while I adore
Thy righteous words and ways.

His friend am I who dearest holds
Thy fear and sacred cause:
O Lord, whose love all earth enfolds,
Oh, teach me thou thy laws.

In kindness o'er thy servant's head,
Thy promise, Lord, is true:
Oh, let thy light and love be shed
On my believing view.

I wander'd far in thoughtless days,
Ere yet thy chast'nings fell:
But now I keep thy sacred ways,
And love thy statutes well.

Ill paths were mine; but good art thou,
And good are all thy deeds:
Oh, teach me ev'ry precept now,
That tow'rd thy presence leads.

Impious and false, with lux'ry swell'd,
The proud my purpose wrest:
But fast thy cov'nant I have held,
With true and joyful breast.

It was but good, that, taught to weep,
I learn'd thy law and fear,
Than gold's or silver's richest heap
Ten thousand times more dear.

Join'd and accomplish'd by thy hands,
My frame and spirit live:
Then, teach me, Lord, thy good commands,
And sacred wisdom give.

Joy on the upright brow shall shine
Of them that fear thy name;
For their strong hope was fix'd with mine,
And they with me o'ercame.

Just are thy judgments, Lord, on me,
And true thy chast'ning stroke;
But let me still thy comforts see,
As thy kind promise spoke.

Judge me in mercy for my life,
While o'er thy laws I bend;
And on the proud man's causeless strife
Let scorn and woe descend.

Journeying with me let those be found,
Who know and dread thy name;
And in thy statutes, firm and sound,
Preserve my heart from shame.

KINDLED with hope, yet faint for fear,
With longing, failing eyes,
"When shall thy comforts, Lord, appear?"
My drooping spirit cries.

Kept by the trust thy word hath woke,
My step no more declines,
Though, like the shriv'lling flask in smoke,
My with'ring bosom pines.

Known to my God are all my days;
How many, Lord, are all?
And when, on mine oppressor's ways
Shall thy dread judgment fall?

Keen is the blow, and deep the snare
Which they who scorn thy laws
Against thy servant, Lord, prepare:
Shield thou his righteous cause!

Kindly my lamp of life relume,
That I may keep thy will:
Almost my foes that life consume,
But I will love thee still.

LONG as the rolling years shall glide,
Or heav'n its arch uphold,
Thy promise, Lord, shall firm abide,
Thy truth shall still be told.

Low in the depths thy sov'reign hand
Earth's strong foundations laid;
And all things serve at thy command,
As all by thee were made.

Light, life and joy thy precepts gave,
Thy precepts unforgot:
Else deep within the gloomy grave
Had clos'd my sorrowing lot.

Lord, I am thine: oh, save me yet,
As I thy truth have sought,
As, while the proud my path beset,
On thee alone I thought.

Lo, I have seen the utmost end
Of all things perfect here:
But thy commands so broad extend,
No thought can bound their sphere.

My God, how dear within my heart
Thy priceless laws abide!
The livelong day they ne'er depart,
Forever at my side.

More wise, while these my thoughts engage,
Than all my godless foes;
More wise than many an ancient sage,
Whose guidance once I chose;

Musing on these with still delight,
And clinging stedfast there,
I turn my feet, and hide my sight,
From each bewild'ring snare.

Matur'd by thy kind words and wise
In thy true judgments' ways,
To thee, to thee, my spirit flies,
From thee no more she strays.

Most sweet the words that teach thy will,
Of all I taste most sweet!
More sweet than honey'd hives distil,
They guard my tempted feet.

Night closes round my pathway lone,
And darkness dims my sight;
But there thy word's fair beams are thrown,
Thy lamp of living light.

Not from the service I have sworn
Shall e'er my footstep move:
Oh, give me life while here I mourn;
Oh, yet thy truth approve.

No heartless song my lips shall lift,
To tell my Maker's praise:
Then take, O Lord, their willing gift,
And teach me all thy ways.

New perils throng, new foes ensnare,
But I thy truth obey:
My life within my hand I bear,
But never more shall stray.

Nearest the fountains of my heart,
Thy holy statutes shine;
I choose them for mine endless part,
And joy to deem them mine.

Oh, how I hate the idle dreams
Of men that love deceit!
But thy dear word's unfading beams
To me are always sweet.

O Lord, my shield and refuge strong,
To thee my trust shall cling!
Depart, depart, ye guilty throng,
For I will serve my King.

On me thy word of grace perform;
My stedfast hope defend;
That still unharm'd, unsham'd and warm,
Mine eye to thee may tend.

O'erthrown and trod beneath my feet,
And cast like dross away,
Are earth's proud sons, who left thy seat,
In falsehood's maze to stray.

O'er all my flesh cold terror steals,
Thy judgments' awful fear:
But still what thy just word reveals
To me, O Lord, is dear.

PURE are the deeds, and good, and just,
That still my hands engage:
Then leave me not, O Lord my trust,
To mine oppressor's rage.

Pledg'd be thy might, to ward my harm;
Nor let the proud prevail;
For, waiting for thy word and arm,
My weary eyelids fail.

Pour on my head thy promis'd grace,
And guide in wisdom's way:
I love, O Lord, thy servants' place;
Oh, teach me to obey.

Prolong no more the ling'ring time,
Nor judgment's hand withdraw:
For now the bands, whose joy is crime,
Annul thy sov'reign law.

Priz'd more than gold, than gold most bright,
I guard thy words within,
Deem all my God's commandments right,
And shun the paths of sin.

RIGHTEOUS and glorious is thy word;
My soul shall clasp it still:
Like dawning morn, its beams are pour'd,
To light the humble will.

Rising to thee, my spirit glows
With streams of sacred fire ;
My panting lips and breast unclose,
And pant with warm desire.

Reveal on me the wonted grace
That crowns the righteous head :
And where thy word the path shall trace,
Oh, guide my peaceful tread.

Redeem me from the scourge of guilt,
And break th' oppressors' bands ;
And be my will whate'er thou wilt,
My joy thy wise commands.

Rivers of waters, from mine eyes,
For sinners' woes descend ;
Oh, let thy smile of light arise,
Till all my sorrows end.

Sacred and true, O righteous Lord,
Thy judgments just abide ;
And all thy holy words record,
Is truth most sure and tried.

Sad that my foes thy precepts spurn,
My zeal consumes my breast ;
But tow'rd those spotless words I turn,
And find my chosen rest.

Small is my name, and men of pride
Have scorn'd my lowly lot ;
But still thy word was all my guide,
Thy truth was ne'er forgot.

Still are thy judgments just and true,
While endless ages roll ;
My joy when clouds o'erhung my view,
And anguish found my soul.

Sure is the justice thou shalt speak,
While endless ages fly:
Oh, give me light, thy truth to seek,
And I shall never die.

To thee my inmost bosom sigh'd,
"Oh, hear me, Lord, above!"
"Oh, save me," at thy feet I cried,
"To keep the laws I love."

Thus, hoping in thy promise kind,
I call before the dawn;
Thus holy musings throng my mind,
Ere evening's shades be drawn.

Then, Lord of love, thou good and just,
Hear thou my constant voice;
And warm with life my drooping trust,
And bid my hope rejoice.

They come, O Lord, who, far from thee,
Tread all the paths of ill:
And near they draw, to thrust at me;
But thou art nearer still!

True are thy laws, thy promise truth;
They change not, nor depart:
I know them from my utmost youth,
Eternal, as thou art.

Upon my griefs vouchsafe to look,
And haste, O Lord, to save;
For ne'er my heart the rule forsook,
Which thy commandments gave.

Urge thou my cause with conqu'ring strife,
When lawless foes condemn;
And give the quick'ning grace and life,
That ne'er shall dwell with them.

Unnumber'd are thy mercies, Lord;
Unnumber'd are my foes:
Oh, give me still thy quick'ning word,
As I thy judgments chose.

Ungodly deeds my sorrows wake,
While on their guilt I gaze:
Oh, give me life for love's dear sake,
As I have lov'd thy ways.

Unchang'd as first thy word was pass'd,
Its quick'ning truths abide;
And firm thy judgments, Lord, shall last,
While endless ages glide.

Vainly have princes on my tread
With causeless hatred hung;
I held thy laws in deeper dread,
And there rejoicing clung.

Vice, with its charms and hidden toils,
Repels my loathing sight:
But more than all a victor's spoils,
Thy laws are my delight.

Varying my pray'r with varying day,
Sev'n times on thee I call:
For peace is theirs, who love thy way,
And they shall never fall.

Veil'd from my sight, yet always near,
Thy succ'ring arm I trust,
And walk securely in thy fear,
And keep thy cov'nant just.

Vig'rous and firm, my steps advance,
Where'er thy law is shown;
For well to thine all-searching glance
My loneliest ways are known.

WHENE'ER I call, O Lord, give ear,
And prove thy promise true:
Whene'er I cry, O Saviour, hear,
And all thy truth renew.

With light and succour crown my ways;
And teach my willing heart:
So shall my lips break forth in praise,
My tongue thy words impart.

Whate'er the path thy laws command,
They all are justice still:
Oh, hold me by thy gracious hand,
As I would choose thy will.

Waiting and longing for thy might,
I joy to own thy laws:
Then give me life to praise aright;
And shield my righteous cause.

Wide from thy fold, my only home,
A wand'ring sheep, I flee:
Oh, seek me, Lord, where'er I roam,
For still I turn to thee.

NOTES.—The author of this Psalm is unknown. Its origin can only be conjectured; and the most probable conjecture points to a time when the Canon of the Old Testament was almost complete. In the Hebrew, the first word in each of eight successive verses is made to begin with the same letter of the alphabet; and all the letters are thus placed in their succession. It is called in the Masora "the great alphabet." As the Psalm has hardly any other order in the arrangement of the thoughts than what is connected with this alphabetic succession, it is necessary for the sake of variety, as well as important to shew the exact character of the original, that so remarkable a feature should be copied in the translation. The whole Psalm consists of a multitude of devout and delightful sentiments, fastened together by this chain. It seems to have been anciently said or sung every Lord's day.

By what strong aid shall e'er a youth. The youth of the writer may seem to be intimated in this passage; but this is very uncertain; since the dangers of youth are so frequently contemplated by every benevolent mind.

Nor, while a stranger here I stray. Michaelis remarks the elegance of this comparison. A stranger may suffer much from the want of

necessary knowledge of the things around him; and a friend who will guide and cherish him is an inestimable benefit. Such a friend is the word of God.

Just are thy judgments, Lord, on me. This passage was uttered by the Emperor Maurice, when his eight children were slain in his sight, immediately before his own murder.

Though, like the shriv'lling flask in smoke. It is well known that the bottles of the Orientals were made of skins; and these were probably dried by the fire, before they were filled. The figure, however, may be derived from the fact that these bottles, when they contained wine, were often exposed to the smoke, for the purpose of improving the wine, by giving it a taste as if of age.

Lo, I have seen the utmost end. These were amongst the dying words of Sir Christopher Hatton; a man who had lived in courts and high places.

My life within my hand I bear. Grotius remarks that this mode of expression betokens the highest dangers, as that which we hold in the hand can so easily be snatched away.

PSALM CXX.

From the dark vale of care
I call'd on God to save:
The Lord vouchsaf'd to hear my pray'r,
And answ'ring succour gave.

Oh, still redeem my heart
From the betrayer's wile,
The tongue that plies the sland'rer's art,
The lips that flow with guile.

What portion shall be giv'n,
False tongue, to be thy doom?
Sharp arrows by the mighty driv'n,
Hot coals of burning broom!

Oh, woe is me to roam
O'er Mesech's barren plain!
To find a wand'rer's tented home
With Kedar's godless train!

Long must my spirit wait
Mid them that love alarms :
I speak of peace, but peace they hate,
And clamour loud to arms !

NOTES.—"A Song of the ascension." This name is given to this and the fourteen following Psalms. Its meaning has been the subject of very various opinions, and is very uncertain. No other idea appears more probable, than that which supposes them to have been sung on the way to Jerusalem, by the pilgrims at the seasons of the great festivals, and to have received their name from this ascent to the capital. They are probably of late origin.

Hot coals of burning broom. The shrub which is here mentioned is used by the caravans for fuel. St. Jerome says that its coals continued to burn for a whole year under the ashes. The wood of a tree common in Arabia, called Gadha, has a similar property. Hence the Arabic proverb, "he has put coals of Gadha in my heart," for, "he causes me consuming grief." The last two lines of this verse may be understood in the original, either as a description of the calumnies of the false tongue, or as a reply to the question, what should be its reward. This ambiguity is preserved in the translation.

O'er Mesech's barren plain. Meshech was one of the sons of Japhet. The Moschi are supposed to have been his descendants ; who dwelt on the western shores of the Caspian Sea, north of Armenia. There may be here an allusion to the captivity.

With Kedar's godless train. From Kedar, a son of Ishmael, an Arabian tribe was descended, who stand in the Scripture (Is. lx. 7.) as representatives of the inhabitants of the desert, and of all wild and fierce nations.

I speak of peace, but peace they hate. These words broke from the dying Melancthon, amidst the hot disputes of the theologians of his time.

PSALM CXXI.

To yon bright hills I lift mine eyes,
And thence expect mine aid ;
Mine aid from him shall soon arise,
Who heav'n and earth has made.

He will not let thy footstep slide ;
Thy guardian shall not sleep :
No slumber's cloud the eye can hide,
That Israel's march shall keep.

The Lord is guardian of thy way,
O'ershad'wing thee with might;
The sun shall harm thee ne'er by day,
Nor e'er the moon by night.

The Lord at thy right hand shall spread
His saving buckler o'er
Thine outward path, thy homeward tread,
Now and forevermore.

NOTES.—"A Song of the ascension." In the version of Tate and Brady, this Psalm seems to be ascribed to David;

"His watchful care, that Israel guards,
Shall Israel's monarch keep."

There is, however, in the original no such reference to a king. In some parts of the world, the Jews repeat this Psalm to one who is about to go forth on a journey.

To yon bright hills I lift mine eyes. The mountains of Palestine, and especially Moriah and Sion, were to the ancient worshippers, as has been before remarked, the figures and emblems of the eternal hills above.

The sun shall harm thee ne'er by day. In the East, the terrible effects of sun-strokes are but too familiarly known. Hence, the umbrella, to which some have supposed that the preceding line alludes, was a very ancient defence; and hence, also, the turban is worn. Apollo, or the Sun, was represented by the ancients with bow and arrows.

Nor e'er the moon by night. There has always been, in many countries, a very general opinion that the influence of the moonbeams is, to some degree, pernicious. The Psalmist does not imply this, though there may possibly be an allusion to such an opinion.

PSALM CXXII.

Glad hails my heart the summons sweet,
When eager brethren say,
"Come, go we up to God's fair seat,
To keep his festal day."

Our feet within thy gates shall climb,
Thy gates that gleam above;
Thou Salem, thron'd in peace sublime,
And girt with walls of love!

For Salem shines, with all her tow'rs,
A city in accord;
And there the tribes array their pow'rs,
The tribes that serve the Lord.

There, round his ark of witness met,
They praise his name divine;
And there are thrones of judgment set,
The thrones of David's line.

Oh, pray for Salem's peaceful days!
And joy for those shall spring,
Who seek thy gates, and love thy praise,
Thou city of our King!

Peace dwell within thy lofty walls,
And crown thy sacred dome!
And blessings fill the palace halls,
Our heart's perpetual home!

For my lov'd brethren's sake, I cry,
May peace around thee shine!
And for the house of God most High,
All blessing still be thine!

NOTES.—"An ascension Song of David." It has more, however, the aspect of a later composition. The application of such a song of pilgrims, to the church of Christ, is too obvious to be passed without notice. In the commentary of Bishop Horne, the reader will find that noble Latin paraphrase, originally composed by Buchanan, and repeated with some alterations by Theodore Zuinger, on his death-bed. The translation of that paraphrase, by Mr. Merrick, which is also inserted there, is hardly surpassed in effect by any devotional poetry in our language.

A city in accord. This seems to denote the completeness and strength of the structures, without any unoccupied space or disagreeable inequalities of architecture. It is an emblem of union in the church.

PSALM CXXIII.

At thy footstool low we wait,
To thy throne we lift our eyes,
Thou, who hold'st thy royal state
Far beyond the glorious skies.

As the servant's eye intent
Watches for his lord's command;
As the maiden's eyes are bent
Lowly on her mistress' hand;

So our eyes and so our pray'r
To the Lord our God ascend,
Till his mercy's sov'reign care
Downward to our succour bend.

Lord of mercy, mercy grant;
Mercy, for our soul is bow'd,
Loaded with the rich man's taunt,
With the scorning of the proud.

NOTES.—"A Song of the ascension" It is very probably one of the Psalms of the exiles in Babylon.

Loaded with the rich man's taunt. The rich dwell in security and luxury; and this is rather the strict meaning of the original word.

PSALM CXXIV.

Were not the Lord, may Israel sing,
Our Champion in the fight;
Were not the Lord our conqu'ring King,
When foes array their might;

Had not his arm the battle turn'd,
And broke the impious strife,
The wrath of man had onward burn'd,
And whelm'd our forfeit life.

The mighty floods, the floods of pride,
No more had ceas'd to roll,
Till deep beneath their stormy tide
Had sunk the victim's soul.

Bless'd be the Lord! He hath not giv'n
Our souls to be their prey:
So, when the fowler's snare is riv'n,
Far soars the bird away.

The snare is riv'n, and we are free:
To God our spirits rise;
For all our aid comes down from thee,
Who mad'st the earth and skies.

NOTES.—"An ascension Song of David." It is more probably of later origin, as it seems to harmonize better with the fortunes of the nation about the period of the exile.

So, when the fowler's snare is riv'n. The weakness of the captive bird, the skill of the fowler, the strength of the entangling net, all make this a very apt image of a helpless and almost hopeless people, suddenly delivered by an Almighty arm. How often has the church of God been even thus rescued by that single aid!

PSALM CXXV.

Who trust the Lord's almighty hand
Like Sion's mount unchang'd shall stand,
Whose rocks forever fast remain,
While storms and foemen dash in vain.

As round Mount Sion's sacred charms
The hills extend their circling arms,
So stands the Lord, a host unseen,
His saints' beleaguer'd home to screen.

Guilt's iron sceptre shall not last
Where God his people's lot hath cast,
Nor grow th' oppressor's might so strong,
To bend the upright hand to wrong.

Bless, righteous Lord, the righteous heart,
And while the slaves of subtle art,
The tempted share the tempter's doom,
Shall peace and love for Israel bloom.

NOTES.—"A Song of the ascension." It has the aspect of a production of that time which immediately succeeded the captivity.

As round Mount Sion's sacred charms. It is well known that Jerusalem was surrounded by vallies, which separated it from neighbouring hills. Reland says, (Pal. Lib. iii. p. 838.) "the city stood in a mountainous region of Judea and on a high spot; but its location was, notwithstanding, low in respect to the surrounding elevations, as the Mount of Olives and others are higher."

To bend the upright hand to wrong. This would be the heaviest evil of oppression, if it could move the servants of God, in despair of deliverance, to give themselves up to iniquity.

The tempted share the tempter's doom. There seems to be an allusion to some victims of apostacy, or to seducers amongst the people themselves.

PSALM CXXVI.

When from the heathen lands
The Lord his own redeem'd,
It seem'd to Sion's wond'ring bands
As if a dream we dream'd.

Then joy to laughter rose,
And mirthful echoes rang,
While, rescued from the captive's woes,
Our song of peace we sang.

Then e'en the heathen cried,
"Great deeds their Lord hath done!"
"Great deeds," our joyful hearts replied,
"His triumph have begun."

Oh, still thine own restore,
As, from the mountains fed,
O'er Southern plains the torrents pour,
Each to its ancient bed.

The harvest dawn is near,
The year delays not long;
And he who sows with many a tear
Shall reap with many a song.

Sad to his toil he goes,
His seed with weeping leaves;
But he shall come, at twilight's close,
And bring his golden sheaves.

NOTES.—"A Song of the ascension." It was evidently written after the return of the Jews from exile.

As if a dream we dream'd. They could hardly believe that so marvellous a deliverance had indeed been accomplished. Men are often thus bewildered by excess of joy, and we hear the question, Is this possible, or do I dream?

As, from the mountains fed. In hot countries, many of the streams become entirely dry in the summer; but in the rainy season they are full again, and rush rapidly down from the hills. This was a delightful image, to express the return of those, whose exile had left their land so desolate and barren. Not all the Jews returned at once, or indeed at all; and therefore this petition was offered.

His seed with weeping leaves. It might happen to the husbandman dependent on his harvest alone, that some adverse appearances at the seedtime would overwhelm him with anxiety and sorrow; but when we pass to the thing signified by the figure, we see that in all sowing except the literal, this must often be.

PSALM CXXVII.

Except the Lord shall build the halls,
In vain the builder's pain;
Except the Lord shall guard the walls,
The watchman wakes in vain.

In vain the toil ere morning break,
The midnight couch unpress'd,
The anxious care that still must wake,
While his belov'd may rest.

God gives the blooming household band,
And crowns the fruitful birth:
As arrows in a warriour's hand,
They guard the plenteous hearth.

How bless'd the man, whose quiver bears
So bright, so dear a weight!
The clash of arms unharm'd he dares,
Though foemen throng the gate.

NOTES.—"An ascension Song of Solomon." The thoughts are so similar to many in the Book of Proverbs, that we are easily inclined to credit the superscription.

While his belov'd may rest. His servants, while they quietly repose under his protection, possess a security, which all the cares and efforts of the worldly cannot win.

Though foemen throng the gate. It is somewhat uncertain, whether this passage refers to judicial controversies, before the tribunals which often held their sessions at the gates of cities; or, as it is here rendered, to the assault of enemies upon a beleaguered town.

PSALM CXXVIII.

How happy is his part,
Who makes the Lord his dread,
And keeps his ways with joyous heart,
And still unwav'ring tread!

The fruits of thine own toil
Shall thy repast supply;
And calmly, o'er thy plenteous soil,
Thy happy days shall fly.

Like some fair, fruitful vine,
Thy spouse thy walls shall grace;
Like olives round thy board shall twine
Thy young and blooming race.

Lo, thus the man shall live,
Who makes the Lord his dread:
And God from Sion's height shall give
Rich blessing on his head.

On Salem's peace thine eyes
Through all thy days shall rest,
Shall see thy children's children rise,
And see thine Israel bless'd.

NOTES.—"A Song of the ascension." This Psalm much resembles the preceding in its contents and character. The possibility has been suggested, that it might be a nuptial hymn, and that the preceding Psalm might have been used as a kind of cradle-song.

Like olives round thy board shall twine. Euripides has the beautiful expression, καλλίπαιδα στέφανον, "a wreath of children fair."

PSALM CXXIX.

Oh, many a time from earliest youth,
Oh, many a time, may Israel say,
The foes of God assail'd my truth,
But ne'er o'ercame th' encircled prey.

Hard on my back the ploughers plough'd,
And deep their furrows red they drew;
But God the just subdued the proud,
And far their sunder'd fetters threw.

Let Sion's foes turn back afraid,
And fade as grass that clasps the eaves;
No mower crops its with'ring blade,
No reaper binds it to his sheaves.

No passing strangers linger near,
Or o'er the gath'rers' toil exclaim,
"The blessing of the Lord be here!
We wish you blessing in his name!"

NOTES.—"A Song of the ascension. It must have been written at a late period of Jewish history. Its application to the Christian Church is striking and beautiful.

Hard on my back the ploughers plough'd. Oppressions are first compared with stripes; and then these stripes with the furrows made by a plough. It is a figure of the utmost degradation and misery.

And fade as grass that clasps the eaves. The flat roofs in the East were covered with earth, on which a little grass might take root. But as its root could not be deep, it could well represent a momentary joy.

The blessing of the Lord be here! Such was the salutation of Boaz to his reapers. (Ruth ii. 4.) "He said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee."

PSALM CXXX.

Out of the waters deep and dark,
O Lord my Lord, to thee I cry:
Oh, let thine ears my voice but mark,
My suppliant voice and sigh.

If thou our sins would'st sternly see,
O Lord my Lord, oh, who could stand?
But sweet forgiveness dwells with thee,
That all may fear thy hand.

My soul on God, on God relies,
More true my hope his promise waits,
Than watchmen wait till morn arise,
Till morn unfold her gates.

O Israel, trust thy King Supreme;
From him redeeming mercies flow;
And he his Israel shall redeem
From guilt and all its woe.

NOTES.—"A Song of the ascension." It seems to be a Psalm for the people under heavy afflictions.

If thou our sins would'st sternly see. Theodore Beza, just before he died, commented upon these words, and added the saying of St. Ambrose, "but we have no cause to be ashamed that we have lived; for we have a gracious Lord."

Than watchmen wait till morn arise. The custom was that one of the Levites who watched in the temple should stand to observe the first rising of the dawn; that the morning sacrifice might be duly prepared.

PSALM CXXXI.

Lord, I am not proud in heart,
  Nor of lofty eye;
Nor above my lowly part
  Strive to walk on high.

Like an infant meek and mild,
  I have learn'd to rest;
Like a gentle, humble child
  On his mother's breast.

Thus, O Israel, trust the Lord;
  Trust him and adore:
He shall be thy full reward,
  Now and evermore.

NOTES.—"An ascension Song of David." Its real origin cannot be fully determined; but there may seem to be in it an expression of the disposition of the people, when adversity had chastened and purified them. Dr. Wolff, in his Researches, mentions a book written by a converted Jew in the East, in which it is recommended that, when a person is not able to sleep, he should read this Psalm. The recommendation is in harmony with the quiet and trusting meekness of the sacred poet.

Like a gentle, humble child. "A weaned child" is the literal translation; and such a child, still lying on the breast of his mother, is regarded by many as here made the figure of entire acquiescence. But it may be doubted whether the force of the comparison lies in that circumstance.

PSALM CXXXII.

O Lord, remember David now,
And think on all his weight of care;
How to the Lord he made his vow,
To Jacob's Strength and Sov'reign sware;

"I will not tread within my hall,
I will not climb to seek repose,
No slumber on mine eyes shall fall,
No cloud of sleep mine eyelids close;

Till I have found a worthy seat,
Where God his earthly throne may raise,
And realms may worship at his feet,
And Israel's Strength and Sov'reign praise."

Lo, Ephrath sent its bless'd report;
Mid sylvan fields its place we found:
Oh, tread we now within his court,
And at his footstool bow around.

Arise, O Lord, to thine own rest,
Thou, and thine ark, of old so strong:
With robes of truth thy priests invest,
And swell with joy thy people's song.

For David's, for thy servant's sake,
Oh, turn not thine Anointed's face:
And thou thy truth canst never break,
The truth thou swar'st to David's race;

"Upon thy throne thy seed shall reign,
And if their heart my cov'nant own,
And still my honour'd laws maintain,
Their seed shall hold an endless throne."

For high on Sion's hill above,
The Lord has fix'd his dwelling bright:
"This is the city of my love,
The chosen rest of my delight.

I bless her stores with large increase,
And plenteous bread her poor shall bring:
Her priests shall walk in robes of peace,
And songs of joy her saints shall sing.

There David's blooming might shall tow'r;
Thence mine Anointed's light shall stream:
Enrob'd in shame, his foes shall cow'r,
But bright his endless crown shall beam."

NOTES.—"A Song of the ascension." It was evidently composed at the time of the dedication of the first temple, and may be the work of Solomon. When the second temple was dedicated, it may have been also sung, and thus have become connected with the later Psalms.

How to the Lord he made his vow. Whether such a vow were strictly made in these terms by David, we have no other account; and it may be merely a poetical mode of expressing his fixed and devout determination. There are forms of speech amongst us, not altogether dissimilar; such as, "I shall not rest till I have accomplished this."

Lo, Ephrath sent its bless'd report. Bethlehem, called Ephrata or Ephrath, "the fruitful," was but six miles from Jerusalem. It was the birth-place of David; and before Jerusalem had been selected as the metropolis, may have been a town of more distinction than that city of the Jebusites. Mount Moriah, a place so near, may have been mentioned under the general name of Ephrath, and may have been a somewhat wild spot, with forests, at the time when it was first designated. The temple was built, as is well known, at the place before occupied by the threshing-floor of Ornan. It is difficult to avoid the thought that the divine inspiration designed, too, in this passage a reference to the birthplace of Him who was the truest temple of God; the incarnate Saviour.

PSALM CXXXIII.

Behold, how joyous is the sight,
How good the spirit's part,
When brethren dear their lot unite,
One happy home and heart!

Not richer once the oil appear'd,
That, pour'd on Aaron's head,
Flow'd gently down his flowing beard,
And o'er his garments spread.

Not softer dews on Hermon's side
From balmy skies distil;
Not softer down from heav'n they glide
To Sion's sacred hill.

For there, where love on brethren's breasts
Has bound its holy tie,
The Lord's eternal blessing rests,
And life that cannot die.

NOTES.—"An ascension Song of David." We can easily believe it to be the work of the royal minstrel; and need to seek no special occasion for its origin.

That, pour'd on Aaron's head. That costly and fragrant oil or ointment was composed (Ex. xxx. 23, 24.) of myrrh, cinnamon, calamus, cassia and oil-olive; and must have emitted the richest perfume. Hardly any figure was nobler to the Orientals.

Not softer dews on Hermon's side. This is another image, peculiarly delightful in the burning East.

For there, where love on brethren's breasts. "*There,*" is referred by many to Sion; but the version which is here given appears more suitable to the whole purport of the Psalm. Perhaps there may be still an ambiguity in the original.

PSALM CXXXIV.

Lo, ye that serve the Lord of light,
Within his temple, night by night,
While thus ye keep your faithful ward,
Lift holy hands, and bless the Lord.

The Lord, who made the heav'ns on high,
The sun, the moon, the starry sky,
And spread below the earth and sea,
From Sion bless thy pray'r and thee.

NOTES.—"A Song of the ascension." This is the last of the Psalms which bear this title; and it may be supposed that the pilgrims have now climbed the hill of Sion. It is evident that the first stanza is addressed to the Levites who kept their nightly watch in the temple. The latter stanza may be their response to the people; or the whole might be sung by alternate choirs among themselves.

From Sion bless thy pray'r and thee. From Sion, as if from the heavenly courts of which it was the image, all blessings proceeded, for which an Israelite could hope.

PSALM CXXXV.

Oh, praise the Lord! With glad acclaim
The Lord's high honours raise:
Oh, praise the Lord's almighty name;
Let all that serve him, praise!

Oh, praise the Lord! His glory sing,
All ye that stand and wait
Within the courts of God our King,
Within his temple gate.

Oh, praise the Lord! The Lord is kind,
The Lord's great name is dear,
In his own Jacob's love enshrin'd,
In Israel's love and fear.

For, us the Lord our Maker chose,
And taught our hearts to own,
How high his throne in glory glows
O'er ev'ry idol throne.

The Lord is great: his great decree
The wide creation keeps;
The heav'n, the earth, the rolling sea,
The caverns of the deeps.

He lifts the outstretch'd clouds on high,
And show'r and lightning blends;
And from his treasures in the sky
The swift-wing'd tempest sends.

His signs, O Egypt, shook thy coasts,
When all thy firstborn died,
From beast to man, from subject hosts
To Pharaoh's crown of pride.

He march'd o'er nations' cloven pow'rs,
And mighty monarchs slain;
Sihon and Og, and Heshbon's tow'rs,
And Bashan's mountain reign;

Till all the kings of Canaan bled,
From Jordan to the West;
And Israel to his home he led,
His home of promis'd rest.

Thy name, O Lord, endures in light,
While ages downward flow;
For thou wilt judge thy people's right,
And pity all their woe.

The heathen gods are gods of gold;
Or silver, fashion'd fair:
Man gave them silent lips and cold,
That mock their vot'ry's pray'r;

Man gave them ears that naught can hear,
And eyes that naught can view,
And mouths, but breath or accent ne'er
Or spoke or murmur'd through.

And dull like them and dead are they,
Who loud their praises tell,
And trust the gods of gold or clay,
Themselves have fram'd so well.

O house of Israel, bless your King,
And praise that name divine:
O house of Aaron, haste and bring
Your praises to his shrine:

O house of Levi, strike the chord,
His holy song to raise:
O ye that fear him, bless the Lord,
And utter all his praise.

Oh, bless the Lord from Sion's walls,
The Lord who reigns above,
Yet deigns to dwell in Salem's halls;
Bless ye the Lord of love.

NOTES.—This is probably one of the later Psalms, prepared to be sung in the temple.

He lifts the outstretch'd clouds on high. The language, which is literally, "he maketh the clouds to come up from the end of the earth," seems to express that which appears to the eye, when the clouds arise from the horizon.

The heathen gods are gods of gold. This delineation is taken, though somewhat abridged, from the one hundred and fifteenth Psalm, which perhaps is otherwise imitated.

PSALM CXXXVI.

Oh, thank the Lord, the Lord of love,
Because he loves, while ages fly:
Oh, thank the God, all gods above,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die.

Oh, thank the mighty King of kings,
Because he loves, while ages fly:
His arm alone high wonders brings,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

Whose wisdom gave the heav'ns their birth,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
And on the waters spread the earth,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

Who taught yon glorious lights their way,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
The radiant sun, to rule the day,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

The moon, to rule the silent night,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
The stars, to pour their sister light,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

Who smote th' Egyptian's stubborn pride,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
When, in an hour, their firstborn died,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

But led his Israel from their land,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
With outstretch'd arm, and conqu'ring hand,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

Who wide the Red Sea's waters clave,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
And guided Israel through the wave,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

But buried Pharaoh and his bands,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
And led his flock o'er desert sands,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

Who smote proud monarchs in their might,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
And warlike princes slew in fight,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

Sihon, the king of Heshbon's tow'rs,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
And Og, the lord of Bashan's pow'rs,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

And gave their land, a household lot,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
His servant Israel's household spot,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

Who thought on us, amidst our woes,
Because he loves, while ages fly;
And snatch'd us from our conqu'ring foes,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die;

Who daily feeds each living thing,
Because he loves, while ages fly:
Oh, thank the heav'n's Almighty King,
Because his mercy ne'er shall die.

NOTES.—This Psalm very nearly resembles the preceding in its contents; and had probably a similar date and origin. It was evidently prepared to be sung with a chorus at each verse, from a separate band of singers or from the whole people. Lightfoot says that there were six and twenty generations from the creation to the conquest of Sihon and Og, which closes the enumeration of the mercies of God by the Psalmist in this place; and that therefore the chorus

occurs six and twenty times. He also remarks that the numerals of the name Jehovah amount to six and twenty. The version of this Psalm by Milton is the only one of his Psalms, which can be pronounced even respectable.

Because his mercy ne'er shall die. For the sake of making a verse more tolerable to an English ear, I have varied the translation of the chorus in the second and fourth lines of each stanza.

And on the waters spread the earth. The earth is viewed as standing out of the waters, and, as it were, supported by them. It is a natural and poetical representation.

PSALM CXXXVII.

By Babel's streams we sat and wept;
Our thoughts to distant Sion clung;
While plaintive winds our harp-strings swept,
That on the drooping willows hung.

For there our conqu'rors, in their pride,
Had ask'd a strain, to crown our wrongs;
And they that spoil'd our altars cried,
"Come, sing us one of Sion's songs."

How shall we sing, while here we roam
The Lord's sweet song, in Salem set
When I forget thee, O my home,
Let my right hand her skill forget!

And let my tongue refuse her part,
My lips no more their portals move
If Salem fade within my heart,
And leave behind a dearer love!

Remember, Lord, how Edom's band,
In leaguer'd Sion's day of woe,
Urg'd on the conqu'ror's impious hand,
And shouted loud, "o'erthrow! o'erthrow!"

Daughter of Babel, doom'd to fall,
Bless'd be the spoiler of thy tow'rs!
Bless'd the fierce arm, that down thy wall
Shall hurl thy babes, as hurl'd ye ours!

NOTES.—This is plainly the work of a captive, or, more probably, of one lately delivered from captivity.

By Babel's streams we sat and wept. Babel or Babylon was the name, not only of the city, but of the land. There rolled the Euphrates and the Tigris; and possibly the rivers may be mentioned, because the Jews, from the custom of ablutions before their prayers, placed their oratories on the banks of rivers.

Remember, Lord, how Edom's bands. The Edomites had shewn themselves very hostile to the Jews at the period of the conquest; and the prophet Ezekiel (xxv. 12, &c.) had denounced the divine judgments against them.

Shall hurl thy babes, as hurl'd ye ours! Such horrors attended the wars of early times. Isaiah (xiii. 16.) adds the same circumstance to his description of the woes that should come upon Babylon. It was not wished from cruelty of disposition, but is named as one of the terrible features in the picture of destruction.

PSALM CXXXVIII.

With my whole heart, O Lord of love,
My thankful gift I bring;
Before thine angel hosts above,
My lay of praise I sing.

I bow me tow'rd thy holy place,
And thank thy faithful name;
For thou hast rais'd thy word of grace
O'er all thine ancient fame.

I call'd thee in my day of need,
Nor long thine answer staid;
Thou arm'd'st my soul with strength and speed,
By thine almighty aid.

All kings of earth thy words shall hear,
And lift their thankful voice,
The greatness of thy glory fear,
And on thy paths rejoice.

The Lord's pure throne is fix'd on high;
But thence in mercy bow'd,
Dwells on the poor his gracious eye,
And knows from far the proud.

Though I must walk mid thronging woes,
Thy love shall give me life:
Thy strong right hand shall crush my foes,
And end their stormy strife.

The Lord shall all my cause fulfil;
His mercies cannot fade:
Oh, leave not, Lord, in days of ill,
The work thy hands have made.

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." There is nothing to fix its origin at any later period.

O'er all thine ancient fame. The meaning of this passage seems to be, that the recent mercies of the Lord had more magnified his glory in the sight of the Psalmist than all former histories of his power and wonders.

PSALM CXXXIX.

Lord, thou hast search'd my secret breast;
Thou know'st my rising and my rest;
And ev'ry thought that silent lies
Is bright beneath thy piercing eyes.

Thou art about the path I tread;
Thou art around my nightly bed;
And not a word is on my tongue,
But in thy sight, O Lord, it sprung.

Surrounded by thy pow'r I stand;
Where'er I turn, I feel thy hand:
Such wisdom tow'rs beyond my sight;
Far, far too high for mortal flight.

If e'er my soul could long for wings,
To shun thy might, O King of kings,
Where from thy Spirit could I hide,
Or where, beyond thy beams abide?

If high as heav'n I strive to soar,
There angels round thy throne adore;
If down to hell's dread couch I bow,
There, in thy terrors, Lord, art thou.

If on the morning's plumes I flee,
To dwell beyond the utmost sea,
Thy hand should still my path prepare,
Thy strong right arm should meet me there.

Or, if I ask the shroud of night,
Lo, midnight's gloom shall beam with light:
There is no night beneath thy ray,
But darkness shines like dawning day.

My inmost heart, O Lord, is thine;
Thou wov'st around each subtle line;
And glad my soul the praise shall tell
Of him whose work she knows so well.

Long ere to light and life it came,
Thou form'd'st this strange and awful frame:
Where deep in earth no eye could see,
The secret work was watch'd by thee.

All shone beneath thy piercing look,
And all was written in thy book;
While, day by day, the members grew,
Nor yet their form and beauty knew.

How dear to me thy thoughts of good!
How vast they greet my musing mood!
The ocean sands far fewer lie:
I sleep, I wake, and thou art nigh.

Thy conqu'ring sword the proud shall slay:
O men of blood, away, away!
For loud, O Lord, their curses ring,
While on thy name their scorn they fling.

Hate I not them that hate thee, Lord;
That lift rebellion's arms abhorr'd?
I loathe, I dread, the dark design,
And all the foes of God are mine.

Search, search me, thou who look'st within,
And try my thoughts' most secret sin:
Pour down thy beams where'er I stray,
And lead me in th' eternal way.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David." It is for the most part a sublime hymn, of a general design; but in one portion, the poet appears as an individual surrounded by ungodly and bloody men. There may be nothing special, however, in the representation; as, alas, the servants of God could always adopt but too far the same language.

Thou art about the path I tread. The version of Tate is so noble in this part of the Psalm, that it could hardly be surpassed; and an author would be very bold, who should aspire to rival it.

My inmost heart, O Lord, is thine. From the vastness of the omnipresence of God, the Psalmist passes to the minuteness of his omniscience. The wide universe illustrates the former; the human frame, the latter.

Where deep in earth no eye could see. This seems but a poetical mode of designating the embryo state.

And all was written in thy book. All was accurately appointed and arranged, as if in a written plan.

Search, search me, thou who look'st within. Devout and consoling conclusion of this awful and yet delightful theme! He who offers this prayer from his heart is already on his way to eternal life.

PSALM CXL.

Save me, O Lord ! From ev'ry foe,
From the proud spoilers' cruel blow,
From evil hearts that love deceit,
Preserve, O Lord, thy servant's feet.

All day they gather to the strife,
Each tongue a murd'rer's sharpen'd knife ;
The serpent's bite is in their teeth,
The adder's venom lurks beneath.

Then save me, Lord, from treach'rous hands,
From the proud spoiler's cruel bands ;
That fast the ambush'd death prepare,
And spread around the net and snare.

O Lord, I cry, my God art thou :
Hear, Lord my God, my suppliant vow ;
And lift thy succ'ring shield of might,
That guards my head through fields of fight.

Oh, grant not, Lord, their evil will,
Nor one dark heart's device fulfil ;
But let their treach'rous crests be bow'd,
And shame and fear o'erwhelm the proud.

Their lips' own guile shall crush them down ;
Red, flaming coals their brows shall crown ;
Till deep in yawning fires they sink,
Beneath the pit's eternal brink.

The man whose words are dark and base
Shall fix on earth no lasting place ;
And he who loves the guilty deed
From vengeful darts in vain shall speed.

The Lord shall guard the cause oppress'd,
And give the weary suff'rer rest:
The just their hymn of thanks shall swell,
And with their God forever dwell.

NOTES.—"For the chief musician, a Psalm of David." Its occasion, if indeed he were the author, cannot be known.

Red, flaming coals their brows shall crown. This description or denunciation may seem to be the earliest instance of that dreadful imagery by which the New Testament represents the misery of the lost.

PSALM CXLI.

O Lord, to thee I cry;
Oh, let thine arm be near;
And while my vows ascend on high,
Bow down thy gracious ear.

Oh, let my early pray'r
Like morning incense rise;
And mine uplifted hands prepare
An evening sacrifice.

My lips, O Lord, surround
With gate and watch and bar;
And from my bosom's hallow'd ground
Drive evil thoughts afar.

Nor let my hand be press'd
To hands that joy in sin;
Nor let me come, a guilty guest,
Where revels guilt within.

When righteous lips shall chide,
The voice of love I know:
Like healing oil their accents glide,
And I must bless the blow.

It bows not low my head
With anguish and despair;
But more the sinner's paths I dread,
And lift my humbler pray'r.

When down each rocky dell
Their fleeing chiefs are hurl'd,
Sweetly my strain of praise shall swell,
And win the list'ning world.

For now our bones are left,
All strew'd around the grave,
Like boughs that late the woodman cleft
Around some forest cave.

But still, O God my King,
I turn me to thy throne:
To thee my stedfast hope would cling;
Oh, leave me ne'er alone.

Oh, save me, close beset
By toils that sinners lay:
Ensnare them in their own false net,
And bear me safe away!

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." It expresses probably the emotions of his heart during some of the persecutions which he endured at the hands of Saul, and at the instigation of baser enemies. This was named from the second verse, "the evening Psalm," and sung at evening service, in the ancient church; "in order," says St. Chrysostom, "that whatever spot or stain may have been contracted during the day, while we have been occupied in the forum or at home or in any other place, may, when we arrive at evening, be removed through this spiritual song."

An evening sacrifice. The morning and evening sacrifices at the sanctuary were of divine appointment. It is the supplication of David that his own prayers may be as pleasing in the sight of God as the institutions which God had himself established.

Like healing oil their accents glide. This passage is not without difficulty, and has been variously interpreted; but the sense which is here given appears decidedly the easiest and the best. It is, also, the sense adopted in the authorized translation of the Bible.

When down each rocky dell. Here, also, the ingenuity of interpreters has been much exercised, I am by no means confident in the

correctness of this version. Much may be said in favour of the translation, "when their judges were dismissed in the sides of the rock, they heard my words, that they were pleasant;" in allusion to the manner in which David called to Saul, after suffering him to go away without injury from the cave in the wilderness of Engedi.

For now our bones are left. The description is that of great distress, and the most imminent peril of life. One can hardly forbear believing that this kind of imagery was borrowed by David from his wanderings in the wild regions to which he fled from Saul.

PSALM CXLII.

My voice shall mount to God on high;
My suppliant voice to God shall cry:
Before his face I pour my tears,
And tell my sorrow in his ears.

When griefs my fainting soul o'erflow,
Thou know'st the lonely way I go:
Thou see'st the toils thy foes have spread,
To snare thy servant's guileless tread.

In vain around I turn mine eye;
At my right hand no friend is nigh:
My distant refuge fades away;
And no man seeks me where I stray.

O Lord my Saviour, thus to thee,
Without a hope beside, I flee;
To thee, my shelter from the strife,
My portion in the land of life.

Oh, mark on high my suppliant vow,
For low with burd'ning griefs I bow:
And bear me from the slayer's might,
That fast pursues my feeble flight.

Redeem me from these captive chains,
That I may lift my grateful strains,
Where thine own saints shall gather near,
And love thy works of love to hear.

NOTES.—"A Poem of David; a Prayer when he was in the cave." Its origin is, no doubt, rightly stated in the superscription, except that we can hardly suppose it actually composed within the cave itself.

Redeem me from these captive chains. This is a figurative expression; literally translated, "bring my soul out of prison." There is no reason to think that it conveys any allusion to the cave.

PSALM CXLIII.

Lord, listen to my call,
And answer to my trust;
While low before thy throne I fall,
Thou ever true and just!

Nor let unpitying right
Thy servant's doom decide;
For living mortal in thy sight
Shall ne'er be justified.

The fierce pursuers' tread
My life has trampled down;
They lay me with the ancient dead,
Where midnight shadows frown.

My heart within me sinks;
For bitter floods o'erflow:
My inmost spirit trembling shrinks,
Deserted in her woe.

I think on days of old,
And all thy wonders trace;
The days that long thy might have told,
The wonders of thy grace.

To thee I stretch my hands;
To thee my tears complain;
And thirsts my soul, as thirsty lands
For drops of summer rain.

Oh, hasten, Lord, and hear,
For griefs my life consume:
Nor hide thy face, for I am near
The dwellers of the tomb.

Oh, let my hope but see
Thy love with dawning day;
And as I lift my heart to thee,
So lighten thou my way.

Redeem me from my foes,
And guide me in thy will:
I seek in thee a safe repose;
My God, my Refuge still!

Let thy good Spirit lead,
Till thy bright kingdom ope;
And be thy name, in all my need,
My life and conqu'ring hope.

Destroy, thou just and true,
The slayer's fell design;
And all that hem my soul subdue,
For I am always thine!

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." There is nothing to fix its special occasion among the events of his life.

They lay me with the ancient dead. The figure is either that of old and deserted sepulchres; or of the shadowy land beyond the grave, shadowy now no longer.

PSALM CXLIV.

Bless'd be the Lord, my Strength and Rock,
The Lord, whose fav'ring might
Has nerv'd my arm for battle's shock,
And taught my hand to fight.

The Lord, my Goodness and my Pow'r,
My Saviour and my Shield;
I trust in that embattled tow'r,
And rebel armies yield.

Lord, what is man, the child of clay,
To win thy thought or eye?
Vain as the shadows on their way,
Our days are fleeting by.

Oh, bow thy heav'ns, great God, from far,
And come in glory down:
The hills shall feel thy passing car,
And bend their smoking crown.

With lightnings light the stormy cloud,
With arrows from thy bow;
And strew the banners of the proud,
And all their strength o'erthrow.

Stretch forth thine arm, and rend the sky,
And bear me from the wave:
Though round me roll its floods so high,
Oh, yet thy suppliant save.

Save from the strangers' impious band,
Whose lips o'erflow with guile;
Whose arm'd right hand, a false right hand,
Belies their treach'rous smile.

A new-made song, my God and Lord,
To thee my heart shall sing:
I strike the psalt'ry's silver chord,
The lyre of tenfold string.

I sing thine arm, thine arm alone,
By highest kings ador'd,
That vict'ry gave to David's throne,
And snatch'd him from the sword.

Still save me from the strangers' band,
Whose lips o'erflow with guile;
Whose arm'd right hand, a false right hand,
Belies their treach'rous smile.

So, as the stately stems entwine,
Our sons shall gird our home:
Our maids like pillars fair shall shine,
That lift a royal dome:

So, ev'ry plenteous store shall fill
The garner and the field;
So, thousands and ten thousands still
The peaceful folds shall yield:

So, strong to bear his burd'ning toil,
The gen'rous ox shall tread:
No conqu'ror's hand shall grasp the spoil,
No captive's tear be shed;

No wail along our streets shall ring:
Oh, bless'd is such a land;
Oh, bless'd the realm where God is King;
Whose strength by him shall stand!

NOTES.—"A Psalm of David." It is certainly the song of a monarch; and, notwithstanding the arguments of De Wette, grounded upon its resemblance to the eighteenth Psalm, there seems no sufficient cause to believe it an imitation, from a later age. The eighteenth Psalm itself, composed, as it was, near the end of the life of David, might have borrowed much of its imagery from this. In the concluding verses, however, there is a tone that strikes the ear like a remembrance of darker days than those of Israel under David.

So, as the stately stems entwine. "Finer figures than these," says De Wette, "could not have been selected, to contrast the rugged energy of manly, with the tranquil beauty of female, youth."

No conqu'ror's hand shall grasp the spoil. The literal translation is, "no breach and no going forth." This has been variously understood; but the sense which is here given is the most probable, and, beyond dispute, the noblest.

PSALM CXLV.

A song of endless praise I sing,
To bless thy name, O God my King:
By day, by night, my thanks I raise,
And sing the lay of endless praise.

Crown'd with the crown of dazzling state,
Great is the Lord; his praise be great:
Descending years his deeds proclaim,
And age to age shall sound his name.

Eternal down that living tide,
Amidst their songs my song shall glide;
For I will praise thy robes of light,
And sing the wonders of thy might.

Greatness and goodness, love and fear,
Man tells of thee, and earth shall hear;
How sweet thy mercy's gentle beams,
How rich thy bounty's ceaseless streams.

In grace so vast, so slow to wrath,
The Lord's kind love is o'er our path:
Joy lives by him in all that live,
And taste the wealth his bounties give.

King of the world, each living thing
Shall join the praise thy saints would bring,
Lift on the winds a glorious strain,
And sing thy dazzling pow'r and reign.

Might, glory, splendour, dwell with thee;
And all the peopled earth shall see:
Nor change nor time thine empire owns,
From age to age, the throne of thrones.

On thee reclines the trembler's trust;
Thou lift'st the fall'n from woe and dust:
Pray'r looks to thee in countless eyes,
And bread for all, thy love supplies.

Rejoicing at thine open'd hand,
All living things around thee stand:
So righteous, Lord, are all thy ways;
So all thy works thy goodness praise!

To him that calls the Lord is nigh,
To him that lifts a faithful cry:
Up e'en to reach the courts above,
Ascends the wish of fear and love.

When hastes the Lord his own to save,
Then yawns for guilt the awful grave!
Ye tribes of earth, oh, join my soul,
To praise his name while ages roll!

NOTES.—"A Song of Praise, by David." This is the last of the alphabetic Psalms. The ancient Jews had a saying, that "he could not fail to be a child of the world to come, who would say this Psalm three times a day."

From age to age, the throne of thrones. In the original, the letter Nun is omitted; but a verse is supplied by the Septuagint. There we read, "faithful is the Lord in his words, and holy in all his works." This would begin in Hebrew, with Nun. As it is difficult to explain an intentional omission of that letter, it is possible that the verse might belong to the original Psalm. Bishop Lowth regards it as certain; but there are in the other Psalms of this class, similar irregularities, which may shake our confidence in his opinion.

PSALM CXLVI.

Praise ye the Lord! My spirit, praise
Thy God through all thy length of days:
I praise him with the breath he gives;
I praise him while my spirit lives.

Trust not the promis'd arm of kings,
The strength that man's vain succour brings:
His breath departs: he sinks to clay:
His thoughts are crush'd in one brief day.

Oh, bless'd the heart, whose hope and aid
On God, on Jacob's God is staid;
Who made the heav'n, the earth, the main,
And all their heights or depths contain;

Who keeps his cov'nant and his trust;
Who gives th' oppress'd a judgment just;
Who feeds the poor from bounteous hands;
And breaks the captive's iron bands.

The Lord unseals the sightless eyes,
And gives the weary strength to rise:
The Lord dissolves the exile's fears,
And guards the widow's lonely years.

The Lord maintains the orphan's cause,
And loves the man who loves his laws;
But down a false and deadly way
He leaves the sinner's feet to stray.

The God of Sion's bulwarks bright
Shall reign through years of endless flight:
Oh, sing, thou city of his choice;
And praise the Lord, each mortal voice!

NOTES.—The Septuagint ascribes this Psalm and the two which follow, to the prophets Haggai and Zechariah; which cannot well be more than a conjecture.

But down a false and deadly way. He disappoints their counsels, and leaves them to the fruits of their own choice.

PSALM CXLVII.

Oh, praise the Lord; for well belong
High praises to our King;
And sweet to us the voice of song,
When God's dear praise we sing.

The Lord, on Salem's lofty crest,
Rebuilds her ruin'd walls;
And back to Israel's ancient rest
The exil'd race recalls.

He comes to soothe the couch of woe,
And all its pains depart:
He pours the healing balsam's flow,
And binds the bleeding heart.

He tells yon host that gem the skies,
And names each starry light:
Great is the Lord, and greatly wise,
Beyond a creature's sight.

The Lord, in endless pow'r Supreme,
Exalts the humble head;
And breaks the sinner's guilty dream
Beneath his conqu'ring tread.

Oh, answer to the Lord with songs,
With songs of sacred fire:
Oh, lift to God a strain of throngs,
And wake the sounding lyre.

The clouds' dark march o'er heav'n he guides,
And sends the rushing rain:
He clothes the grassy mountain's sides,
And clothes the velvet plain.

The beasts' wide wants his care supplies,
From hill and field and wood;
He hears the nestling ravens' cries,
And gives them plenteous food.

He joys not in the might of steeds,
In footmen swift or strong;
The Lord's delight are righteous deeds,
And hearts that wait him long.

O Salem, high his hymn resound;
Let Sion's God be bless'd!
His arm has fenc'd thy portals round,
And giv'n thy children rest.

Through all thy vales he yields thee peace,
And on thy guarded shore;
And fills with all the fields' increase
Thy garners' golden store.

Wide o'er the world his word he sends,
And, fast as breezes fly,
To utmost earth's untrodden ends
His fleet commandments hie.

He spreads like wool the snowy sheet,
The frost like ashes casts;
He drives in storms his icy sleet;
And who can bear his blasts?

He sends his word: o'er frozen plains
The milder breezes blow;
And leaping from their melting chains,
The joyous torrents flow.

He shew'd his laws to Israel's bands,
To Jacob's seed his word;
So know his deeds no heathen lands:
Oh, praise the gracious Lord!

NOTES.—It appears from the second verse, that this Psalm was composed after the return from Babylon.

He hears the nestling ravens' cries. So in Job (xxxviii. 41.)

"Who provideth for the raven his food?
When his young ones cry unto God,
They wander for lack of meat."

The raven is said to desert her young very early, leaving them to fill the air with their cries of complaint.

His arm has fenc'd thy portals round. This appears, as Rosenmueller has remarked, as if the erection of the walls under Nehemiah may have been fresh in remembrance.

He spreads like wool the snowy sheet. Eustathins is quoted as saying that the ancients called the snow a watery fleece; and so Martial names it, (Epig. Lib. iv. 3.) "densum vellus aquarum." The whiteness, thinness and softness of both are the points of comparison.

And who can bear his blasts? We are to think of the cold north wind, piercing a frame accustomed to the genial sun of the East.

PSALM CXLVIII.

PRAISE THE LORD!

Praise the Lord from heav'n on high;
Praise him in the lofty sky;
Praise him, all his angels bright;
Praise him, all his hosts of light;
Praise him, sun and moon afar;
Praise him, ev'ry radiant star.

Praise him, heav'ns that heav'n upbear;
Waters, higher hung in air;
Let them praise their sov'reign Lord,
For they rose beneath his word:
He hath fix'd their places fast,
With a bound that ne'er was pass'd.

Praise the Lord from earth below;
Monsters of the ocean's flow;
Fire and cloud, and snow and hail,
And the storm's obedient gale;

Mountains, and their highlands all;
Fruitful groves, and cedars tall;

Beasts that field or forest bore;
Worms that creep, and birds that soar;
Kings, and men of lowly birth;
Chiefs and judges, thron'd on earth;
Youths and maids in blooming choirs;
Smiling babes, and hoary sires:

All, your Lord's high name proclaim,
High and bright o'er ev'ry name:
Heav'n and earth his glory spread,
While he lifts his people's head,
Lifts the seed that own his fear,
Israel, to the Lord so dear.
Praise the Lord!

NOTES.—This is a Psalm apparently composed at first for public use in the temple, and at a time of national prosperity. Bishop Horsely calls it "a Hymn for the Sabbath." There is a good paraphrase by Mrs. Hemans.

Praise him, heav'ns that heav'n upbear. Beyond the visible heaven a higher heaven was represented to the imagination. St. Paul (2 Cor. xii. 2.) speaks of Paradise as the third heaven.

Waters, higher hung in air. This is the same representation of clouds and vapours as in the narrative of the creation. (Gen. i. 6.) "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." For, the lower atmosphere is called a firmament and heaven.

Worms that creep, and birds that soar. The Talmud and the Koran describe the mountains and forests, the birds and all living things, as literally responding to the songs of David. (Koran xxi. xxxiv.)

PSALM CXLIX.

Praise ye the Lord! yet loftier lays
With his assembled people sing:
Let Israel tell his Maker's praise,
And Sion's children bless their King.

Oh, praise his name with harp and voice,
With timbrel's clang, and measur'd tread;
He loves the people of his choice,
And wreathes with joy the humble head.

Oh, let his honour'd saints be strong,
And sing and slumber undismay'd;
To God's high praise attune the song,
And grasp with might the conqu'ring blade.

So let them quell the broad domains
Where Gentile darkness hung till now;
And bind their kings with iron chains,
Their chiefs in lowly fetters bow:

So let them bear th' avenging rod,
And do his word's own just award:
Such glory waits the saints of God,
Through distant years: oh, praise the Lord!

NOTES.—This Psalm is probably of nearly the same date with the preceding.

Let Israel tell his Maker's praise. The word Maker is here in the plural, in conformity with the divine name. That name itself is a mystery, unless it contain a reference to the plurality of persons in the Godhead.

And sing and slumber undismay'd. The literal version is, "sing upon their couches;" which may express either the constancy or the security of their rejoicing.

To God's high praise attune the song. Bishop Patrick supposes that they are represented as singing, according to the ancient customs, when they went forth to battle.

And bind their kings with iron chains. Under figures like these, the subjection of the whole world beneath the dominion of the Gospel was boldly foreshadowed.

PSALM CL.

PRAISE YE THE LORD!

Oh, praise our God, where, bright in grace,
His presence lights his holy place:

Oh, praise him from the heav'nly arch,
Where goes his pow'r's resplendent march:

Oh, praise him for his deeds of fame,
The might that all his foes o'ercame;
And praise him for his glorious throne,
That shines on all, and shines alone.

Oh, praise him with the trumpet's sound,
While all his temple answers round;
And praise him with the lofty lyre,
And silv'ry psalt'ry's chords of fire.

Oh, praise him with the timbrel sweet,
And dancing tread of joyous feet;
And praise him with the notes that ring
From ev'ry harp of various string.

Oh, praise him with the cymbals loud;
Oh, praise him with the cymbals proud:
Let all that breathe, with glad accord,
Lift high their voice, to praise the Lord!

Praise ye the Lord!

NOTES.—This also is doubtless a Psalm prepared for the temple; and probably one of the latest.

His presence lights his holy place. The earthly sanctuary and the heavenly may both be here imagined, and perhaps both were meant; the former as the shadow of the latter.

Oh, praise him with the cymbals proud. Different instruments may be designated in these two lines. The literal translation is, "cymbals of hearing and cymbals of clangour."

Thus closes, of course, the last of the five Masoretic books of the Psalms. In the Septuagint, the old Italic version, the Mozarabic, and elsewhere, another Psalm is added, which is said to have been written by David after his victory over Goliath. It has evidently no claim to insertion.

Genl Herkimer in Am Revol wounded in battle at Oriskany
reading 38th Psalm just before death 77

Rt. Rev. George Burgess, D.D.,
Bishop of Maine, 1847-1866.